


## Ranton Parish Council

**Councillors,**

**You are summoned to attend a meeting to be held on Thursday, 21st July 2016 at 7.30p.m. at Ranton Village Hall for consideration of the matters itemised in the following agenda.**

**All members of the parish are entitled to attend and have their say.**

### **Agenda**

- 1) Apologies
  - 2) Declarations of interest in the following agenda
  - 3) To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016 as a true record
  - 4) Public Questions
  - 5) Seighford airfield
  - 6) Finance matters
    - i. Transfer of authority on accounts
  - 7) Accounts to date
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July Accounts 2016 -  
17.xlsx
- 8) To receive reports:
    - i. Mowing
    - ii. Highways
    - iii. Footpaths
  - 9) Ranton Parish Council archiving of documents
  - 10) Ranton Parish Council clerk appointment
  - 11) Parish Clerk report
  - 12) Website
  - 13) All Saints School
  - 14) Chairman's Questions/Items for Information/Next Agenda
  - 15) To resolve on planning applications
  - 16) Date of next meeting

Gayle Whelan, Ranton Parish Council Clerk

rantonparishcouncil@gmail.com

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RANTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY 16 JULY 2016 AT RANTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. J. Forrester (Chair)  
Cllr. N. MacLeod (Vice-chair)  
Cllr. M. Russell  
Cllr. S. Williams  
Cllr. M. Winnington (late)  
BC Stephen Leighton  
BC Ray Sutherland (late)  
G. Whelan (Clerk)

**16/62 Apologies**

None were made.

**16/63 Declarations of interest in the following agenda:**

Cllr Williams declared an interest in Ranton All Saints School and polytunnels planning application. Borough Councillor Sutherland also declared an interest in the polytunnels planning application. No other declarations were made.

**16/64 Previous minutes:**

The minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on 16 June 2016 were recorded as a true record.

**16/65 Public questions:**

Polytunnels application (16/24273/FUL): The public meeting on polytunnels was well attended and many objections were raised. These have been summarised relating to legally what points can be raised (specifics relating to the actual application, the application boundaries and a previous retrospective application) and will be presented to the planning department by the parish council. These points have been summarised and discussed later as part of *16/76 To resolve on planning applications* and as appendix 1. The application is currently being assessed and a date will be given for a committee meeting or the application will be dismissed.

Action: Details and documents relating to the polytunnel application will be placed on the This is Ranton website.

Action: Councillor Leighton will forward a list of inaccuracies in the planning application to the planning department and will request that a site visit be made.

**16/66 Seighford airfield:**

DriveMe have submitted a new application to Staffordshire Borough Council, however, Ranton Parish Council have received no documents. Councillors discussed appropriate

planning for a number of forthcoming events planned at the airfield over the forthcoming year which will need necessary approvals.

It was discussed that a formal letter has not been sent to the council regarding lack of follow up from previous complaints made to the council by Ranton Parish Council. The only option for complaint is to appeal to SBC's three group leaders. Alternatively, a case could be presented by an individual to the Ombudsman, however, the Parish Council Chairman has already spoken to the Ombudsman.

Action: Parish clerk to look into whether a planning application has been received for future events and to follow up on documents for this application (16/24443/FUL). Borough councillor Leighton will keep the parish clerk informed of any planning call ins.

Outstanding action from 16/36: Chair to draft letter with Mr D. Batchelor regarding lack of correspondence from previous complaints.

Action: Councillor Macleod to send documents to parish clerk and Ranton Parish chairman will draft a letter and will contact the Ombudsman again to confirm procedures for complaints.

#### **16/67 Finance matters**

There has not been any feedback to Grant Thornton on the annual return as the document is still awaiting an internal audit to be carried out. The parish council bank account needs to have its signatories changed to remove former councillors and parish clerk.

Action: Parish clerk to confirm the processes with Nat West bank. Parish clerk will also arrange transfer of authority from previous parish clerk to current clerk with the bank and update contact details as well as signatories. Cllr Russell will be added as an authorised signatory and the previous parish clerk and former Councillor Batchelor will also be removed.

Outstanding action from 16/37: Councillor MacLeod will complete the return and J Hill will be asked to sign.

Action: Financial information and details needs to be handed over to parish clerk. Councillor MacLeod will pass on all relevant documents.

#### **16/68 Accounts to date:**

No invoices can be paid yet until account signatories are changed. A notification of highways minor repairs purchase order has been received for £660.40 for expected repairs during the year 2016-2017.

Action: Councillors MacLeod and Williams will sign cheque for Zurich insurance premium (£250.11) and the invoice for SPCA training (£40) for Parish clerk once the chair has obtained the cheque book from the former clerk.

Action: Councillor MacLeod will check with the auditor that the audit has been carried out and a signature added.

Action: Councillor Forrester (Chair) will contact former Parrish Clerk to obtain former electronic documents for the parish council.

#### **16/69 To receive reports:**

Mowing: Complaints have been made that the churchyard lawns have been cut very close, and mowings left for a second time and is bare earth in many parts. Patches have been left bare where the mower has cut too close to the ground. Cutting on Whites Meadow is excellent.

Action: Parish clerk will monitor for the next cutting. Streetscene have been contacted but there has been no further correspondence. Mick Bailey at Streetscene will be contacted directly.

Highways: Patching and resurfacing of Coton Lane from White's Meadow up to the gun club has been completed. However, the road beyond the gun club has only been patched. Orchard Lane has also been patched along with Brook Lane. Ditches are also extremely poor towards Ranton Green and have not been cleared in the last 12 months.

Action: Parish clerk to contact Staffordshire County Council Highways regarding drains being jettied through as they are full of silt and the ditches cleared. A letter will also be drafted from the parish council to landowners asking them to clear the drains out. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to Borough councillor Sutherland.

Footpaths: Generally good – Footpath leaving Hextall Lane is extremely overgrown and has been reported by Councillor Williams. The footpath by Ranton Abbey has been cleared. The area by Ann's Wood has now also been cleared. In some areas along Hextall Lane through to Hextall Farm is difficult to walk through due to rape seed fields.

Action: Parish council to write to landowners to clear the footpaths.

#### **16/70 Parish Council archiving of documents**

The parish council will look at costs relating to storing its old documents. Minutes and agendas should be kept for 6-10yrs.

Action: Parish clerk to contact SPCA to check how long material needs to be archived for.

#### **16/71 Parish clerk appointment**

It was proposed by Councillor Williams that the parish clerk's probationary period be extended to cover the next parish council meeting in September. This was seconded by Councillor Forrester (Chair).

Action: A decision on the parish clerk role will be deferred until the next meeting. Councillor Williams will draft a terms of reference, and consideration of pay conditions, amount and term will be discussed at the next parish council meeting as a private item without the parish clerk present for that item.

#### **16/72 Parish Clerk report:**

**Laptop:** An application form for a parish council laptop will be completed by the parish clerk and sent off to the transparency fund.

**Defibrillator:** There are many options to funding a defibrillator, which can be done with or without a training package. This will be discussed as a full agenda item at the next meeting.

**Outstanding action:** Councillor Williams and Parish Clerk will look at the three most efficient options and discuss at next month's agenda.

**Parish Clerk role:** Hours and rate of pay of parish clerk have yet to be agreed. The current parish clerk's probationary period ends next month, and will be discussed at the next parish meeting.

**Outstanding action from 16/45 –** Parish Clerk will organise gratitude to J Hill on behalf of councillors for her service to the parish council, paid for by councillors.

#### **16/73 Website update:**

None

#### **16/74 All Saints School**

The school will open as Ranton All Saints Primary School at 9am on Tuesday, 5 September and MP Jeremy Lefroy has been invited to attend.

**Ongoing action:** Parish clerk to create a five year period hand over document on an annual basis to include what to take forward.

#### **16/75 Chairman's Questions/Items for Information/Next Agenda:**

Discussion of Ranton Parish Clerk appointment.

Councillors were advised of the Village Hall Committee's cricket match which will be held on 23 July at Ranton All Saints School.

#### **16/76 To resolve on planning applications:**

Seighford airfield 16/2443/FUL (see 16/66). See objection report to planners (appendix 1):

16/24273/FUL - Retention of and construction of polytunnels for the production of soft fruit at Ranton House Farm, Long Compton Lane.

Councillors discussed main points for objection and a formal response was drafted and sent to the council immediately following the meeting (appendix 1).

**Action:** Parish Clerk to check planning application for subsequent application

#### **16/77 Next parish council meeting**

Thursday, 15 September at 7.30pm in Ranton Village Hall.

Appendix 1: Polytunnels objection submission letter

RANTON PARISH COUNCIL

THE OLD MEAL HOUSE,

RANTON, STAFFORD

[rantonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:rantonparishcouncil@gmail.com)

Date: 22 July 2016

Mr M Alford

Planning and Regeneration

Stafford Borough Council

**Planning Application16/24273/FUL Ranton House Farm , Ranton**

For the attention of Mr M Alford - Planning, Stafford Borough Council

Ranton Parish Council strongly objects to the above application for the following reasons:

The application is muddled , incoherent and seems to be 2 applications

1 - It is a retrospective application for retention of unlawfully erected polytunnels (physically existing} on a site for which there is no planning consent and no plan is provided. There has been no polytunnels erected on this site in the Parish of Ranton prior which require planning consent.

2 - The actual application is for the erection of Polytunnells on a massive scale( possibly 20 times larger than the site in 1) and also includes the site of the unlawfully erected polytunnels

The reports Ecology, Visual impact, Transport, etc focus on the existing unlawful site and as such does not properly deal with the whole site and is totally misleading.

Our objections to the Application include:

- a) Severe and adverse impact on the open agricultural landscape by massing of covered structures.
- b) Unacceptable increase in farm and transport vehicles along narrow country lanes which are already dangerous for current traffic. In particular Coton Lane along which access to the site is made and which is used substantially by pedestrians and children, cyclists

and horse riders from Ranton and the surrounding villages. A single bus in Coton lane will not enable a pedestrian to pass safely .

- c) The proximity of tunnels up to the village boundary is unacceptable both visually and in terms of noise as a result of unsociable working hours and plastic sheeting. The proposed “buffer zone “ is totally insufficient’
- d) Inadequate amenities for the proposed work force of up to 530 staff?
- e) No statement of the obvious increase in vehicle movements and the disturbance to the local area.
- f) Unacceptable loss of visual amenity by way of a) above both for the village of Ranton and local bridleways and footpaths that cross the application site.
- g) There are obvious threats to local public rights of way
- h) The flood risk assessment is inadequate and does not address existing flooding issues in Ranton.
- i) Ranton is an attractive village with a Norman church and other listed buildings and the massing of polytunnels around the village will be an obvious conflict with the character of the area.

It is appreciated that the countryside is also a working environment and if a proper application was made some of the issues would be addressed if enforceable conditions were applied such as:

- Larger buffer zone to the village of Ranton based on the topography of the village and surrounding farmland.  
The removal of all polytunnels from the land bounded by Dog Lane and Coton Lane.
- Maximum of 25 acres in use at any one time
- The initial rotation as stated in the application to apply and any subsequent rotation details be subject of a further application.
- Coton Lane and other highways to be kept clear of mud and other debris at all times. A wheel/vehicle washing condition should be applied.

J C Forrester

**Chairman Ranton Parish Council**

Signed..... Date.....

Gayle Whelan, Ranton Parish Council Clerk

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