

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RATBY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT THE METHODIST CHURCH ROOMS,
CHAPEL LANE, RATBY AT 8PM**

‘DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL’

‘UNADOPTED’

PRESENT

Councillors: Mrs M B Joyce (Chairman), Mr L J P O’Shea (Vice-Chairman),
Mr C W Boothby, Mr P J. Johnson, Mr R Tasker and Mr P Tenwick

Members of the

Public: 1

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

24/12 Apologies for absence were received from Ms K Johnson and
Mr K Hunnybun, both of whom were indisposed.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

24/13 Minutes of the last meeting held on 9th January 2024 , having previously been
circulated, were proposed by Mr Tasker, seconded Mr O’Shea, unanimously agreed
and signed by the Chairman.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL PREJUDICIAL AND PECUNIARY
INTEREST AND DISPENSATION FROM MEMBERS ON ANY ITEMS TO BE
DISCUSSED.**

24/14 Mr C W Boothby declared an interest in any matter relating to Planning
matters.

4. REPORTS

24/15 (i) Borough Councillors’ Report – Mr Boothby gave a verbal report (see
Appendix 1) (ii) County Councillor’s Report (see Appendix 2)

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8.15 to allow for public participation.

5. FLOODING

24/16 Mr Preston addressed the meeting regarding concerns about the flooding of
Desford Lane, if further development goes ahead, due to the amount of water which
flows towards Holywell Cottage, Desford Lane, which is part of his farm land.
The flooding issue appears to have worsened since the new Medical Centre has been
built plus the additional development in Markfield Road. If more development take
place, this will cause serious flooding issues for the village.

mpj

The farm fields are already sodden with all the recent heavy rain and further development will dramatically increase the risk of flooding., particularly from Desford Lane. Mr Preston also stated that the stream which flows under the Lane, which is adjacent to Holywell Cottage, floods after heavy rainfall. Meeting informed that both Mr Boothby and Mr O'Shea attended the Gladman Appeal today regarding further development in Ratby and several residents presented their objections opposing this development.

Mr O'Shea raised the matter of passing bays along Burroughs Road, Mr Preston explained that he had spoken to the Highways Engineer, and was told this was not possible, therefore he had not been able to carry out any work on this. Mr O'Shea agreed to take this matter up with Highways Department.

Mr Preston thanked Council for the opportunity to voice his concerns and was thanked by the Chairman.

The meeting was reconvened at approximately 8.32pm

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

24/17 (Aa **24/00030/out** – 130 Stamford Street, Ratby LE6 0JQ – Outline planning application for new residential dwelling (all matters reserved) (i) Objection – already application for 2 houses on this site – extra residence in back garden would have extra properties in a small area (ii) Stamford Street is already very tight at the top and difficult for emergency vehicles etc., to negotiate this road – this application would be adding more traffic to an already impossible situation (b) **24/00033/FUL** – 6 Park Road, Ratby LE6 0JJ – 2 storey rear extension, replacement single storey side extension and alterations to windows – No objection (c) **24/00041/DISCON** – Land south of Ratby – Application to discharge Condition 5 Badger Survey Report as issued by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd dated 16th August 2023 – Ref 101783KGF?LTW – No objection.

7. PLAY EQUIPMENT REPORT

24/18 Ferndale Park – (i) Toddler play area see saw – retaining clips and rubber stopper missing (ii) missing bolts on inclusive roundabout, plus whole roundabout table grating on floor. Still awaiting response from Wicksteed.

8. URGENT ITEMS

24/19 (a) Allotments rent increase of 20% as discussed at previous meeting, proposed Mr Tasker, seconded Mr O'Shea and agreed. Mr Tenwick had drafted a new lease, but Chairman informed meeting that new lease had already been adopted and this was still in use.(b) Website management – meeting informed that 2commune would cease to provide service on 31st March 2024. Cuttlefish, who had been providing server use for 2commune would continue to provide the same service at the

same licence price etc., and they had purchased 2commune. Discussion ensued and it was proposed by Mrs Joyce seconded Mr O'Shea and agreed that Council stay with Cuttlefish as no changes would be made to the operational side of the website.

(c) Damage to Taverner Drive Bus Shelter – quotation for repair received from E L Construction for £715 excluding VAT for removal/disposal of existing damaged polycarbonate parts and supply/fit 18mm buffalo board to bottom half of existing shelter. Discussion followed whereby Council informed that residents in Taverner Drive had stated that this shelter was not regularly used. Due to this information the quotation was not accepted and it was suggested that Maintenance Officer be asked to remove damaged parts (d) Hedgerow Burroughs Recreation Ground – Mr Boothby had been approached by resident whose back garden was being encroached by the hedgerow and if nothing was done about trimming back the resident threatened to take legal action against the Parish Council. Meeting informed that the Council's contractor had been previously requested to trim back hedgerow and would be contacted again. (e) Village sign – 11ft post for new sign- proposed Mr Tasker, seconded Mr Tenwick and agreed that George Walker Ltd. be approached for quotation etc. (f) Stone Wall, War Memorial Site – wall damaged by tanker during gas/water incident in Ratby. As this was Parish Council property and had been constructed by HBBC Heritage, it was Council's priority to ensure that the wall was repaired by qualified stone mason. Bradgate Education Partnership had instructed a Stone Mason James Toon who had originally constructed the stone wall. Haulage company had accepted responsibility for the damage and there would be no cost to the Parish Council (g) Precept Working Party – this matter was discussed at previous meeting. However, Mr Tasker had prepared an alternative budget, stating that on his budget he had placed a 'target' which could make a saving of approximately £20,000. (h) Letters of thanks - ~Gas/Water incident – Discussion regarding 'thank you' letters being sent to Cadent, HBBC, Leicestershire Fire & Rescue, Leicestershire County Council, Blaby District council, St John's Ambulance, Red Cross, Leicestershire Resilience Forum proposed Mr Tasker, seconded Mr O'Shea and agreed unanimously. (g) Damaged planter – Insurers have offered £201 ((policy excess £250) discussed - proposed acceptance Mr Tasker, seconded Mr Boothby and agreed.

9. SAFEGUARDING POLICY

24/20 A draft Safeguarding Policy document had been received and it was proposed Mr Boothby, seconded Mr O'Shea and unanimously agreed that this policy be adopted by the Parish Council.

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

24/21 (a) List of Payments proposed Mr Tasker, seconded Mr Tenwick and agreed.

11. CLERK'S REPORT

24/22 (i) Leicestershire Footpath Association – AGM 24th February 2024 at Wygston's House, 23 Applehgate, Leicester LE1 5LD – 11a.m. – brief discussion –

MBJ

No Councillor able to attend on this occasion (ii) HBBC – Flood funding details on Borough’s website .(iii) Offers of assistance during the gas/water incident in Ratby were received from Councillor Harris (HBBC) and Mr Will Treece(Brookvale College) - these were thanked and acknowledged. Residents from 48,46,44,42,40,38 Danehill sent a thank-you card, together with a box of chocolates which was taken to the meeting. The Council was very appreciative of both your thanks for the help and for the offers of assistance.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24/23 Mr O’Shea had attended a meeting at Groby Parish Council and it was proposed that Groby/ Markfield and Ratby join together in creating an event on 6th June 2024 to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the end of World War II
 Unfortunately, since Ratby has lost the Station Road/Desford Lane Recreation Ground, there is no suitable place for this to be staged. Meeting reminded that agreement had already been given for the beacon to be lit from the Ratby Parish Church Tower on that day.. Discussion followed. It was acknowledged that this was too big an event to take place for one group and suggestions were made regarding the Rooting for Ratby group etc.

There being no further business the meeting closed at approximately 9.45pm.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting

Marie B Joyce
 Chairman

12/3/24
 Date

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3	C/Cllr’s Report	24/15(ii)	1
4	Planning Applns/	24/17	2
5	List of Payments/ Income	24/21	3

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – FEBRUARY 2024**APPENDIX 2****Ratby Gas Leak**

On Monday evening 29th January I was alerted to 3 separate water leaks on Main Street, Ratby by my colleague Cllr Chris Boothby after he had called Severn Trent but was not happy with the result. As Cabinet Member for Highways, I contacted our on-call highways team who gave me an emergency number for Severn Trent. I rang Severn Trent and was given a 12hour time frame to attend and 3 separate reference numbers. Unfortunately, by the time Severn Trent arrived on scene the water pressure had fractured the gas pipe forcing water in the gas system. As a result, the next morning residents of Ratby and parts of Kirby Muxloe found they had no Gas. It soon became clear this was a major incident the whole of Ratby was without gas. I was contacted by Council officers and appraised of the serious situation. I then joined officers in the village. I then worked with Highways and Cadent to put road closures in place and attended the village hall to help and support residents with my fellow Borough Councillor, Chris Boothby. A collection point was set up in the village hall by Cadent. A Leicestershire resilience team was setup including officers from Leicestershire County Council, Hinckley and Bosworth, Blaby District Council, Leicester Search and Rescue, the St John' Ambulance and Red Cross. Cadent's emergency planning swung straight into action. The Village Hall was turned into a collection point for residents. Lorry loads of vital supplies were delivered Chris Boothby spent several hours helping the team unload lorries. The Cadent operation to help residents worked like a well-oiled machine. They provided Heaters, Blankets, Hotplates for cooking on, Socks, Electric Blankets, Oil filled radiators and Draught Excluders to help residents cook and cope with the cold weather. We were able to support residents visiting the village hall in need of help. At one point the queue stretched back to the Bulls Head public house and some residents had to wait an hour to get their warm packs. We raised this as a concern, the weather was becoming very cold and Cadent again put more staff on to ease the waiting time. I must say people were surprisingly in good spirits. It was pleasing to see younger residents coming to collect heaters, hotplates and blankets for their elderly neighbours.

The resilience team was based in the library. I liaised with officers to make sure that all vulnerable residents were visited. Several elderly residents had contacted me asking for help and officers arranged for heating and supplies to be taken to them. This clearly had now become a major incident.

Officers and volunteers visited homes to check for vulnerable residents and to make sure residents had turned their gas supply off at the meter, to stop the water entering their domestic system. Officers had a full list of vulnerable residents in the area and to make sure those persons were looked after. Teams visited every house in Ratby and 400 houses in Kirby Muxloe that were also affected. Any other vulnerable residents they came across were fed back to the Resilience team who arranged for heaters, blankets and hotplates to be delivered and in some cases, food vouchers. Leicester Search and Rescue and the St Johns Ambulance did a fantastic job delivering supplies to the elderly and those identified as vulnerable. I

spent time liaising with officers in the control centre and meeting residents at the collection centre, asking them if they needed any extra help. Tuesday and Wednesday were long days I must say but Ratby's community spirit kept us all going. I want to put on record my thanks to Cadent. They were brilliant they brought in over 200 staff from all over the country to tackle and resolve this problem that was not of their making, they did our community proud. The swift and efficient way they organised lorry loads of supplies to be delivered to the collection centre was first class. Put simply, they could not have been more helpful, their staff were kind and sympathetic to residents. My thanks also go to the Council officers, Leicester Search and Rescue Team, the Red Cross and the numerous local volunteers who visited every household in freezing conditions.

The work continued on through Wednesday 31st January with vulnerable residents being cared for and food vouchers supplied. A steady stream of people collected heating supplies from the village hall. Teams have continued to work round the clock. On Saturday, 3rd February, I am pleased to say, large parts of Ratby and most of Kirby Muxloe are now reconnected. However, parts are still without gas, including my home. However, Cadent engineers are working tirelessly to get us all re-connected and Council officers are still here checking on the vulnerable. The Resilience team have moved to the Church rooms. When you realise the full extent of the problem that Cadent were facing, they really are doing a wonderful job. Water had contaminated 30km of the gas pipe network. **We do have a wonderful friendly community. I am so proud to represent you as your Councillor.** Chris and I will be out helping again tomorrow and every day until we all have our gas working again.

Storm Henk Funding

Following the impact of Storm Henk, County and District Councils have been working with Government leads to clarify a number of issues relating to the National Flooding funding, and collaborating to put the best system in place locally.

From today (Friday), householders and businesses are encouraged to apply for the first element of this funding which is being managed by District Councils.

Leicester City Council is also contacting eligible residents and businesses to encourage them to apply for funding.

The financial support includes:

- **A £500 grant for households** – where the living accommodation has been flooded or the home has been left uninhabitable, such as when utilities have been cut off
- **Eligible households may also qualify for the Council Tax Discount scheme** Entitling them to a 100 per cent discount for a minimum of three months.

For affected businesses, the following schemes. Which have stricter criteria, are available:

- **Business Rates Relief Scheme** - 100 per cent relief on business rates for a minimum of three months. To qualify, flood water must have entered the property, or the flooding seriously impacted upon the business's ability to trade from the property during Storm Henk.
- **Business Recovery Grant** -A grant payment of £2,500 for those severely affected by Storm Henk, with criteria closely aligned with the Business Rate Relief Scheme.

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Leicestershire County Council will also be co-ordinating a property flood grant – where eligible flood hit property owners can apply for up to £5,000 to help make their homes and businesses more resilient to future flooding – and more details will be available soon.

Councils are contacting eligible people directly and increasing awareness through broader activity including media relations and social media posts.

Application forms, eligibility criteria and extra information can be found on District Council websites. Anyone unable to complete the form online is advised to call their District Council directly. Information is also available on our website.

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/flood-funding>

Watch out for Rogue Traders cashing in on Storm Damage

Residents who have suffered damage caused by last week's Storm Henk are being warned by Leicestershire Trading Standards to be on their guard against rogue traders.

Hundreds of homes and businesses were damaged as Storm Henk tore through the county last week, with Loughborough and the surrounding area particularly affected by widespread flooding.

Leicestershire County Council's Trading Standards team is now urging people to be on the alert for doorstep traders and cold callers offering building repairs, garden work and clean-up services, which may be sub-standard and over-priced. Rogue traders target people when they are at their most vulnerable and use events like Storm Henk to cash in and make money. They know that people need to make urgent repairs to their property or clear up fallen trees, so may knock on the door and suggest repairs that they claim they can carry out quickly. These unscrupulous traders pose as legitimate tradespeople, often targeting the elderly and vulnerable people within our communities. These offenders are extremely believable and can come across as very charming and trustworthy but they can also use aggressive behaviour and scare tactics. They advise people that work needs to be done when it often doesn't – this work can be sub-standard and consumers can find themselves paying more than they originally agreed.

We would ask people to be on their guard against this type of scam and to look out for our friends, families and neighbours to ensure they don't fall victim. The message is simple – if you're not sure, don't open the door.

Leicestershire Trading Standards has issued a checklist to help people steer clear of rogue traders and doorstep scams:

- Do not agree to any work on the doorstep
- Go online to search for reviews and recommendations
- Is the trader listed as a Limited Company? - If so, it should be listed on Companies House. Does the company exist? If not, the trader is giving false information about their company details.
- Obtain a minimum of three quotes by different tradespeople
- Obtain full details of each business that provides a quote, visit any website and/or social media page they hold, check their address on the Royal Mail website
- Ensure that the contract of works required, the quoted and agreed final price are all received in writing.
- Never pay in cash – use a secure method such as Bank transfer or Credit card

- Do not feel pressured to pay prior to any work being conducted. A reputable builder will not request money up front for work that has not been carried out. If the trader is legitimate, they won't mind waiting for you to come back to them once you have made an informed decision. Be wary of those that say they can start straightaway, whatever reason they give you.
- For contracts over the value of £42, traders must give you a notice that you have 14 days to change your mind and cancel the contract., .An exception is if work needs to be carried out in an emergency or at your express request, but you must waive these rights in writing
- Has the trader offered to take you to the Bank to withdraw money? If so, this is considered an 'aggressive practice, so consider this a warning sign
- Speak to friends or family before parting with any money if you are unsure
- If you feel in immediate danger, call the police on 999 or for a non-urgent matter, call 101

For more advice and guidance call 0808 223 1133 or visit

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer>.

To report a rogue trader visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/tradingstandards

Finally, I would like to wish all residents and fellow councillors a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year. I would also like to thank you all for your continued support and remind you that should you need my help or advice, I always pride myself on making myself available to residents. Remember I am only a phone call or email away.

Ozzye O'Shea

Always Working for you Locally

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LIST OF PAYMENTS/INCOME FEBRUARY MEETING 2024**APPENDIX 3**

Cheque No.	Company	Amount £	Detail
104745	HMRC	1848.31	(Dec.2023)
104746	Comunicorp	88.00	Subscription
104747	Leicestershire Footpath Assn.	6.00	Annual Subscription
	TOTAL	£1942.31	

DIRECT DEBIT/BANK PAYMENT

Salaries	2680.45	Salaries – Jan.24
Nest Pensions	122.11	Nest Pensions
British Gas	63.03	Gas
E'on	32.69	Office Bldg.
E'on	52.25	CCTV-Ferndale Park
HSBC	9.00	Bank Charges
LRALC	370.00	Internal Audit
Ratby Senior Citizens	12.00	P/CL mtg 13/02/24
HBBC	1601.71	Inv.900308860 (Hanging baskets 23)
HMRC	5881.66	Refund overpayment Qtr.3 VAT
	TOTAL	£10824.90

INCOME

VAT Refund 3 rd Qtr.	8920.03	(overpayment of £5581.66-refunded)
VAT-Actual 3 rd Qtr..amount	3038.37	(3 rd Qtr. Vat refund)
TOTAL	£11,958.40	