**RIBCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 21 October 2024**

**PRESENT:**

**Parish Councillors:** Caunce, Cromie, Finch, Mason & Yates

**Borough Councillor:** Barnsley

**Residents:** Ten, + two representatives from Ribble Rivers Trust and two from B4RN project

**Apologies:** Cllrs Dickinson and Ellis**,**  A McLoughlin (Knowle Green).

**24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** A matter of particular concern to residents was the recent removal of the lifebuoy with safety line attached, and the installation of a Safety Notice Board with contact details displayed. The main point of concern, persuasively made, was the perceived length of time it would take to follow the instructions displayed when a life might be at risk of any person who had fallen in the river, or been carried away from the ‘Tush’ whilst swimming. Further concerns were the positioning of the throw line, and worries about the consistency of mobile phone signals at that point on the riverbank.

It was confirmed that this change had not been requested by the Parish Council, but was instigated and carried out by Lancashire Fire and Rescue. It was reported that a key factor in the removal of the traditional lifebuoy ring was the concern about vandalism. It was noted that there were no recent incidents of such vandalism at Ribchester.

After a fruitful and positive discussion, it was **AGREED** to seek the reinstatement of the ring/lifebuoy on the proviso that the Parish Council would take on the responsibility for its upkeep/maintenance. This was **AGREED.** In addition, theLengthsman would be requested to undertake checks on the replacement ring/buoy as an addition to his normal range of duties.

**26 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**: The Minutes of the meeting 15th July were confirmed and duly signed.

**27 MATTERS ARISING**:

27.1 Members of the **B4RN project** team were present to provide an update as to progress on the project’s completion. It was noted that it was a project of two and a quarter years’ duration, which had required a significant amount of work by volunteers and funding from local investors. On the ground, it had involved consulting with 100 landowners and gaining agreement from all of the 302 local homes. It was confirmed that the project had now reached the point of connecting the first 12 homes at the end of the month. It was acknowledged that, to complete the project in full, further investment would be needed – but this was anticipated to be forthcoming.

The project had secured government funding through the Rural Prosperity Fund (part of the Levelling Up Agenda). The amount of £50,000 had been promised, to be paid to the Parish Council in the first instance which would then transfer to the B4RN project. The Parish Council was formally thanked for its assistance in facilitating this transfer of funds.

27.2 Cllr Mason raised the issue of the promised ‘**Youth Bus’** which did not appear to have engaged local young people. It was noted that the service will not be continuing at present, but would recommence for Spring/Summer 2025.

27.3 **Village Benches Project**. Councillors are currently putting together a policy for the village benches, to cover a period of 10 years. There is a process being actioned which is attempting to trace the families of the persons to whom the benches are dedicated. One family has come forward to date. An offer to undertake small works on the benches has been received.

**28 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

**3/2024/0268 – Tan Yard Farm.** Councillor Barnsley reported that he had called in this application; working with Cllr Brocklehurst (Councillor for Hothersall PC). The main reasons for this action was because of serious concerns about traffic exiting the site emerging onto Ribchester Road, and also the environmental concerns about the site.

**29 REPORTS FROM PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES:**

Cllr Barnsley reported that he had attended the RVBC Policy Finance Committee meeting. He reported that he had proposed that RVBC meetings should be broadcast.

**30 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

It was RESOLVED to make the following payments:

SS Peter & Pauls Room Hire £30

Clerk’s Salary mid-September to mid-October £428

Lengthsman’s Fee (since re-engagement, following break) £795.54

**Transfer** of Rural England Prosperity Fund to B4RN Project £50,000

**31 VILLAGE MATTERS**:

31.1 The proposal to install a ‘Village’ noticeboard, in addition to the Parish Council noticeboard was agreed, in principle. As well as the need to cost and budget for such an addition to the village, the matter of siting was seen as important. Once suggestion has been made to site it near to the public toilets/car park. This proposal will be pursued further

31.2 A proposal from earlier in the year, which has been considered but not yet actioned is to install further flower containers in the village – with a view to rekindling interest in the Lancashire ‘Best Kept Village’ Competition or the national ‘Britain in Bloom’ competition.

31.3 – Ribble Rivers Trust Presentation. Two members of RRT attended to present an update of projects and work being undertaken to reduce the incidents of flooding in Ribchester

There being no other public business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm