

Notice to Residents regarding the Rothley Centre 13th March 2025

In order to address questions that residents have raised regarding the closure of the Rothley Centre, the following statement has been produced:

Rothley Parish Council has recently reviewed the financial forecast for the next financial year and identified a need to subsidise the Rothley Centre by £30,000 solely for running costs. There will be additional costs for maintenance. Given the significant financial burden, we cannot expect our Council taxpayers to cover these costs.

During our meeting on February 17th, 2025, the Council had a confidential agenda item to consider the future of the Rothley Centre. The facts were presented to all Councillors, and after a lengthy discussion, a proposal was made to give Charnwood notice to terminate the lease at the end of 2025. The vote resulted in 9 in favour and 1 abstention. Consequently, we have given Charnwood notice to terminate the lease, and we are awaiting their response.

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, certain agenda items can be discussed in a confidential session, excluding the public and press. This is applicable when the nature of the business to be transacted involves sensitive information, such as commercial or financial sensitivity, legal proceedings, or matters that could breach personal data legislation. In this case, the discussion about the lease termination was held in a confidential session due to its commercial and financial sensitivity.

We will now move our Parish Council office to the Village Hall and have advised all our users accordingly. We have allocated time slots at the Village Hall for Rothley users where possible. Unfortunately, a few groups, mainly organised by non-Rothley residents, will need to find another venue. We have been as fair as we possibly can by giving the users 10 months' notice to find an alternative venue.

It is very unfortunate that misinformation has been spread by both social media and letters to residents regarding the closure of the Rothley Centre. Some residents are being unduly influenced to complain based on this misinformation. We want to clarify that we are committed to serving our community's best interests and ensuring transparency in our decision-making process.

Regarding the car park at Rothley Centre, it is listed as a community asset in Charnwood's asset register and should remain available for businesses and residents to use. Charnwood has a duty to provide off-street parking in all service centre villages, and our Borough Councillors are aware of this responsibility and should ensure this continues.

We want to allocate Council tax money towards our Village Hall, which the Parish Council owns, to make it a vibrant venue for the village. Additionally, we aim to spend Council tax money on other assets we own and maintain our playgrounds by providing the best possible equipment for the children of Rothley.

Given the age and condition of the Rothley Centre, it's challenging to predict all the repairs that may arise. While we can identify some immediate repairs needed, an old building can present unexpected maintenance issues over time. Factors such as wear and tear, weather conditions, and the building's existing structural integrity can all impact the type and frequency of repairs required. Thus, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive schedule of repairs, as unforeseen problems may occur.

This was not an easy decision and we recognise that it will be a loss to the village, equally the problem here is not the Parish Council but the Borough Council who has failed to engage with us to secure a new lease on the building which allows the RPC to operate the centre on a sustainable footing.

We will keep residents updated via our website.