

**COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2020
AT 7:30 PM BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Maximum of 20 mins at the beginning of the meeting to hear public questions and comments)

Parishioner: Asked, on behalf of another parishioner, about recent works and traffic lights at Trent Valley and if anyone knew what was being done and if the hedge is to be replaced.

Chairman thought it was pipeline works and suggested the PC could contact Mrs Pope to see if she knew about any hedge replacement (Clerk).

Parishioner: Asked if Clerk had contacted Mary Lee about proposed village signs.

Clerk had received a reply from Mary Lee, who wanted to know the exact positions proposed for the signs, in order to confirm the land is owned by the County Council. She would be prepared to offer help until a site visit could be arranged after lockdown. She pointed out that they needed to be at least half a metre from the carriageway or footway to ensure no pedestrians or road users get injured. She had not offered any comment as to whether planning permission is normally needed.

Noel Talbot said he was in favour of the signs but thought the proposed design might be a little too big. Clerk to go back to Mary Lee to progress (see item 9).

Flooding issues - Dave Hughes, who is a consultant working at the Environment Agency, joined the meeting for Public Participation. He had met residents at Blithbury Road recently and was investigating reasons for the bad flooding they experienced last winter/spring. Whilst water backing up from the Trent was certainly a contributory factor, another possibility was water spilling out of Moreton Brook, although locals thought it only spilled out at Bellamour Way. He had provided some initial questions by email to the PC and was interested in parishioners' thoughts, as he didn't want to pursue any measures that would be unpopular. He thought, from comparing to old photos, that the brook bridge looked silted up and some of the vegetation and silt could usefully be removed up and down stream and under the arches. (PC was keen for this to be done). He commented on the ford by the bridge and wondered if it was still used and if it would be feasible to block off the main road side of the ford. However that would push water towards the village, which was undesirable. Chairman stated that the first place water comes out is from the gully on the main road side of the brook bridge, which we have been telling SCC is blocked for some years, so pursuing that with SCC would be useful. He also commented on the weir, which holds the water level high under the bridge. This could also do with regular clearing of the silt built up behind it. An option could also be to punch a hole in the weir to get more of a gradient and allow silt to be washed further downstream. He had walked the brook to Trent Valley as far as possible on public footpaths and was interested in obtaining the names of the landowners in order to follow the brook more closely. He also felt it looked in need of a good clean. He had been told that the brook keeps running full to the top and only runs out in the fields to the north of the railway station. There is a culvert there which goes under the railway station and industrial estate. He had asked Network Rail for a report and photos from the cleaning out they did about 5 years ago, in order to model water flows and see if it could cope with any overspill from the brook. Videos of the Blithbury Rd flooding appeared to show that when the Trent level gets very high, the culvert backs up and possibly water from the fields could only then spill on to Colton Road. A non-return valve on the culvert might be an option or a pumping station, but the latter would be expensive and difficult to get funding for when only 6 or 7 houses are affected by the flooding. He said future housing developments on the former power station land should not be a further issue as new developments have to have sustainable drainage. SCC would require balancing pools and water would have to be held on site and only released at a controlled rate.

Dave Hughes would send maps requesting details of the relevant landowners and asked for any photos or videos of flooding in the village or spillage from the Moreton Brook to be sent to him.

(No member of public may address meeting hereafter).

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. To note attendance and receive apologies for absence

In attendance were Chairman Emma Godwin, Cllrs Sarah Plater, Noel Talbot and Steve Jenkinson, District Councillor Shirley Barnett and Clerk Alison James. Also 3 members of the public.

2. To receive declarations of interest - Emma Godwin for item 6 (HS2)

3. To approve minutes of meeting held on 7th October 2020 by video conference – These were approved and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date. Shirley Barnett pointed out that she was still to receive details from the Clerk of the issues that the PC wanted her to pursue on its behalf relating to flooding and highways (Clerk)

4. Chairman's Announcements

Chairman wondered if other councillors would be supportive of PC setting aside some money from its reserves to provide vouchers to help any Colton individuals or families in particular need e.g. for food, especially as we entered a further period of lockdown. Clerk had tried to speak to auditor about whether s.137 provision (to benefit community in ways not covered by specific powers) could be used and would pursue further. Councillors were in favour in principle but concerned whether it was permissible for a PC to do and how it would be properly administered. Clerk to make urgent enquiries.

5. Payments

a) To approve the following payment:

i)	1826	Alison James – Clerk's salary, November (239.82); Home working expenses, 4 weeks, 10 Oct – 6 Nov (16.00); Re-imburement for Zoom licence, 26 Oct – 25 Nov (14.39); Re-imburement for PC mobile top up (10.00) and 2 nd class stamps (3.90)	£284.11
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The payment was approved. Chairman asked about cost of annual Zoom licence but this tied PC in for a year and saving was relatively small.

6. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required, including

- a) Invitation to Phase 2a annual meeting for parish and district councils via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 26th November, 10am – 12.30pm – No councillor to attend. Sarah Plater had attended last year and felt the meeting did not achieve anything useful.
- b) Opportunity to bid for funding from HS2 Road Safety Fund – Possibly worth investigating for previous idea for a cycle route on B5013 and footpath improvements too (Clerk).
- c) Online events including live public event on Tuesday 10th November, 1pm-2pm, about Community and Business Funds and Business opportunities relating to Phase 2a of railway (Email, circ. to cllrs & flyer for noticeboard) – Clerk to also circulate details to relevant village organisations etc.

7. Planning Matters

- a) To note the following application and any more recent applications and make observations to the Planning Authority:
 - i) 20/01353/COU – Lea Hall Farm, Lea Lane, Rugeley – Demolition of portal framed agricultural buildings and change of use of, and extension to, redundant agricultural buildings to create 4 dwellings, erection of 3 parking barns, extension to driveway and associated works – Some concern whether access from proposed development is on to Admaston Bank. Comments deadline is 20th November so time for further look at plans (**Councillors**).
- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority – **Clerk** to check if decision made on recent Parchfield House Farm application.
- c) To consider any further action required on application 18/01303/FULM – Proposed gas fired power station on Land North of Bellamour Lane – Nothing further heard. LDC Planning Committee November agenda not yet available.
- d) To consider any other current planning/enforcement issues – LDC Enforcement had written to applicants at Yorkshireman advising that wall at front and new outbuilding on car park required planning permission. No response yet received so LDC would write again.

8. Highways & Footpaths

- a) To report on progress and agree any action required:
 - i) Flooding including Blithbury Road and Colton Road by the Yorkshireman and possible site meeting with Environment Agency – Dealt with under Public Participation.
 - ii) Blocked drains and spilled oil at Stockwell Heath – Resident had reported still an issue despite reports made. Chairman had also reported sinking grid further down High St.
 - iii) Footpath alongside Colton Rd – To be pursued by Shirley Barnett as part of action at item 3 but **Clerk** to also follow up with her petition contact at SCC.
 - iv) Potential action to remove blockage on Footpath 11 – Chairman clarified who landowners were and suggested **Clerk** write to them requesting a stile and also ask Paul Rochfort if he would supply one.
 - v) Any other footpath issues, including bird scarer adjacent to bridleway Colton 33 and broken stiles – Clerk had written.

9. To consider progress and further action required on proposed new village gating/signs

Further to discussions under Public Participation, **Clerk** to try another means of forwarding parishioner's mock-ups of signs in position to Mary Lee, as could not open them on PC laptop, though could view on mobile phone. A check on the sites should be arranged when feasible.

10. To consider update on Remembrance Sunday arrangements in light of Covid-19 restrictions

Revd Anne Noble had circulated her proposed arrangements, though unfortunately church service could no longer take place. **Chairman** or **Sarah Plater** would lay PC wreath at war memorial sometime on the day

11. To consider request from St Mary's School for contribution to cost of purchasing Chromebooks

Marie Havelock had made request as Local Advisory Group member for Colton and some initial queries had been raised. 19 Chromebooks were needed and

school never missed looking for other funding opportunities first. Whilst PC was not against the idea in principle of helping those children living in the parish, more information was needed about how many could not be paid for by parents and which other organisations had been approached etc. (Clerk to request).

12. Correspondence

To note items of correspondence received and agree any actions required:

- a) Parishioner's email of 23/10 concerning PCC proposal for barriers across entrances to Pedley's Croft (Email, circulated to cllrs) – Email read to meeting, primarily raising concerns about increased road parking and reduced safety for schoolchildren, but PCC had already put barriers up.
- b) LDC – Information about Community Infrastructure Levy and request to complete annual CIL report for 2019-20 (Email; Clerk submitting report) – Report submitted to LDC, who had also advised about allowed uses of CIL.
- c) LDC – Briefing note about blue bin recycling process (Email, circulated to cllrs; submitted to parish magazine)
- d) Staffs Police – Encouragement to register for Staffordshire Smart Alert community messaging service (Email, circ to cllrs; poster on noticeboard)
- e) CPRE – Response to Planning white paper and its concerns about the impact on rural areas (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- f) SCC – Temporary road closure on Ashbrook Lane, Abbots Bromley and diversion, intended for Sunday 15th November (Email circulated to cllrs; copy to be put on noticeboard)
- g) What3words – Update on use of the What3words app (Email)
- h) LDC – Consultation on Draft Events and Festivals Policy and Procedure and associated draft guide (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- i) SCC – Sign up to be a Staffordshire volunteer (Email)
- j) SPCA – Weekly bulletins including guidance on continuing remote meetings

13. Committees

To receive any update from Burial Ground Committee – Various issues require discussion by BGC so Clerk to either arrange Zoom meeting or issue email.

14. Finance and audit

- a) To note timetable for 2021/22 precept request and implications of tax base figure received from LDC – Deadline is 22nd January, similar to usual. Tax base has decreased by 2%.
- b) To receive update on amendment to bank mandate – Clerk still to complete online application to remove Matt Crompton as signatory.

15. Parish Council matters

- a) To discuss any progress on filling vacancies on the parish council – Sarah Plater had lost her draft magazine article when her computer died but would look at circulating a new version. In meantime, Clerk to do vacancy notices.
- b) To note date of next PC meeting – Wednesday 2nd December.
- c) To also agree the timing of the annual budget discussion meeting – PC agreed to start next meeting earlier at 7pm, with budget discussion first. For transparency, Clerk to confirm VHMC and PCC budget requirements beforehand and also to update the recent financial report of income and expenditure against budget with October and November payments. Meeting closed 8:55pm.