

**COLTON PARISH COUNCIL – PARISH ASSEMBLY, WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL  
2021 AT 7:30 PM BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**BUSINESS AGENDA**

1. To agree to defer arrangements and any open forum discussion for the Annual Parish Assembly to a later date, as legislation and circumstances allow

The PC is legally required to hold a Parish Assembly between 1st March and 1st June each year. Whilst an amendment to this requirement was put in place last year, the usual legal requirement still stands this year. Advice was sought from the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association which suggested that the Parish Council could hold a 'perfunctory' Parish Assembly. This could have a single agenda item, to defer the arrangements for discussion to a later date when circumstances allow. This way the Parish Council can effectively comply with the legal requirement. The PC had therefore agreed to convene this meeting and it was agreed that arrangements should be deferred, possibly to the summer when a face to face meeting might be possible. Clerk had contacted representatives of village organisations and no-one had raised any concerns. Chairman said that it would be interesting to hear then from organisations about the impact of the pandemic on their membership and funding.

## COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021 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: Bellamour Lodge hedge is encroaching on Bellamour Way pavement. Some vehicles are driving through the ford, which is polluting the brook. Also asked that footpath is extended right up to the brook bridge, as currently pedestrians have to walk on the road in the path of traffic as they approach the bridge.

Chairman suggested having a pedestrian walkway painted on road and also bollards on either side of the brook to stop cars going through the ford but still allowing pedestrians and horses to cross. A request would need to be made to Highways.

**(No member of public may address meeting hereafter).**

### **BUSINESS AGENDA**

#### 2. To note attendance and receive apologies for absence

In attendance were Chairman Emma Godwin, Cllrs Sarah Plater, Mel Havelock-Crozier, Nigel Parry and Noel Talbot, District councillor Shirley Barnett (left after item 9) and Clerk Alison James. Apologies received from Cllrs Richard Birkin and Steve Jenkinson. Also in attendance were 6 members of the public.

#### 3. To receive declarations of interest

Emma Godwin – items 6 and 7 a) i)

#### 4. To approve minutes of meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March by video conference

Minutes were approved and would be signed at a later date (Clerk to arrange).

#### 5. Chairman's Announcements

Thanks and good wishes were expressed to John Carter for his support to the PC and the parish over 43 years. He would be a great loss to the community.

#### 6. Payments

##### a) To approve the following payment:

i)	1840	SPCA – Annual subscription 21/22 (231.00); Explore Chairmanship course (50.00)	£281.00
ii)	1841	HMRC – Payroll taxes, Q4, Jan – March	£207.38
iii)	1842	Alison James – Clerk's salary, April (239.82); Home working expenses, 5 weeks, 6 Mar – 9 Apr (20.00); Re-imburement for Zoom licences 26 Feb–25 Mar and 26 Mar-25 Apr (28.78); BGC Clerk salary, 1 Jan – 31 Mar (137.50) less tax (27.50)	£398.60

(Total new payments above, for approval this month = £886.98)

All payments were approved. Clerk noted that cheques would be prepared for signature promptly after the meeting in order to meet the HMRC payment deadline.

#### 7. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required including

- Further HS2 consultation on impacts of Phase 2a and response to Sarah Mallen – Clerk to check that SCC had responded to consultation and had included PC's comments.
- Availability of Community and Business Funds – Steve Jenkinson had previously agreed to read information to offer guidance about how to apply.

So further discussion deferred till he was present. Clerk to check when funds would become available.

- c) Possible engagement meeting mentioned by Hinson Parry – It was not clear whether any PC land would be affected and therefore whether that possible meeting was relevant. However PC agreed that it would be beneficial to have more information about all the works that would be happening locally and to better understand the effects on the parish as a whole. Clerk had recently received letter from HS2 about proposed surveys relating to a small area of land inside the boundary of Lake Cottage by Stockwell Heath pond, which did not appear to be PC or common land. Clerk to contact Liz Davis at HS2 and Simon Ashfield at Hinson Parry to ask for a 3-way meeting and also to find appropriate HS2 contacts. Chairman commented that HS2 needed to increase their environmental mitigation and had recently issued further notices of compulsory land purchases.
- d) 'In your area' interactive map to check for any local area works – Clerk to check if map was now up to date and showing works local to Colton.
- e) Phase 2a newsletters including Ground Investigation works and presentations and postponement of ecology presentations – Sarah Plater had signed up to hear a Ground Investigation works presentation.

## 8. Planning Matters

- a) To note the following application and any more recent applications and make observations to the Planning Authority:
  - i) 21/00359/FULM (Full application (Major)) – Land at Colton Mill Farm and Cawarden Springs Farm, Blithbury Road, Colton – Installation of a 49.9MW ground-mounted Photo Voltaic solar panels (109,000) and associated infrastructure including sub station, transformers, fencing, CCTV, access track, landscape mitigation and ecological/ecosystem services enhancements – PC had not offered any objections or comments, as application appeared in line with information which had been presented at PC meeting a couple of months ago. Shirley Barnett commented that it is a major application and believed that Mavesyn Ridware PC had submitted concerns about retaining footpaths.  
A further application had been received (since agenda issued) for Croft Cottages, which was retrospective for covered area at end of garage to rear.
- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority – Extension at Bellamour Hall and leisure building at Parchfields House both approved.
- c) To consider any further action required on application 18/01303/FULM – Proposed gas fired power station on Land North of Bellamour Lane – Sarah Plater had spoken to George Burda, who was still prepared to speak on PC's behalf at LDC Planning Committee. PC agreed that a reminder should be put in magazine and on noticeboard (Clerk) that anyone who had objected to the application would receive an email when it went to the Committee for determination. They should apply to speak, nominating the PC representative, to ensure the one objector's slot was secured by us.
- d) To consider any other current planning/enforcement issues – Don Winn had been out of the office for 3 weeks but would be contacting applicants at The Yorkshireman again, following an apparent wider problem with mailings from Enforcement not being received. Clerk to follow up before next meeting.

## 9. Highways & Footpaths

- a) To report on progress and agree any action required:

- i) Flooding including Blithbury Road and Colton Road by the Yorkshireman and further feedback to Environment Agency (EA) – Dave Hughes had provided an update on the timescale for the EA’s modelling of Moreton Brook, which would be available in summer. Clerk to ask if EA were responsible for further blocking of outlet near weir which fed Bellamour Hall lake.
- ii) Enquiries into possible de-silting of Moreton Brook – Any action on slowing of brook near bifurcation below weir would need to await results of EA modelling. However Noel Talbot had recently provided photo showing silting under bridge arches, particularly obvious when compared to photo from a few years ago. Clerk to send photos to EA.
- iii) Recent flooding questionnaire and other information from SCC Flood Risk Management team – Clerk had circulated but Shirley Barnett stressed as many as possible should fill it in and record other flooding issues e.g. at brook bridge, not just flooding of homes. Clerk to check if it had been sent to parish magazine.
- iv) Drain and gully clearance around the parish – Gully clearing machine had been seen around village in recent weeks but not all had been done. Garry Hunt at Highways had sent holding reply to PC email so Clerk to chase further response soon.
- v) Footpath alongside Colton Rd – Much surprise that vegetation had recently been cleared along whole length of footpath, apparently by LDC at request of SCC. Clerk to send thanks, though resurfacing now needed and ideally spraying once or twice a year to keep it clear. Sarah Plater offered to ask TGM for a quote if PC were to pay.
- vi) Any other footpath issues - none
- vii) Progress with Litter picking initiative – A group of pickers are going out regularly, with LDC supplying bags and also collecting them if notified.
- viii) Additional gritting of High Street – Previously agreed in principle that PC will pay for gritting of High St when needed so take item off agenda.
- ix) Removal of fallen tree over Moreton Brook below weir – Clerk to chase.
- x) Overgrown hedge on Heathway – Hedge had recently been cut back.
- xi) Safety of Blue Wall – Clerk to contact LDC Building Control to ask them to inspect recent works, which did not appear very satisfactory.
- xii) Lamp post opposite school missing cover – Noel Talbot to report online.
- xiii) Railings on stream bridge at end of nature reserve - Bridge is actually on the Martlins on Colton 1 footpath and railings are loose. Clerk to report online to Rights of Way and obtain further copies of parish map.

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

Concerns had been expressed at last meeting about colour of signs so proposed article in parish magazine had been delayed. Sarah Plater had since circulated 4 designs (2 different sizes and with or without blue) to councillors. After a vote, PC favoured the larger size, without blue and for the wording to be ‘Colton – Historic village.’ Clerk to check previous comments from parishioners and Sarah Plater to then submit article for parish magazine.

#### 11.Request from VHMC for a PC contribution towards running a post-lockdown parish social event

VHMC was proposing an event on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July with free food, paid bar, children’s games and entertainment. PC may run duck race on same day and organise another hanging basket competition at a similar time. Sarah Plater had been invited to join an organising meeting the following day. After discussion, PC agreed in principle to make a significant donation to support the event and match VHMC contribution, subject to further details and costs before next PC meeting.

## 12. Correspondence

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

- a) SCC - Regular updates on community testing for Coronavirus (Emails)
- b) SCC Flood Risk Management Team – Flooding questionnaire, for completion by any residents, especially those whose homes have been flooded (Email, circulated to cllrs & parishioner email list)
- c) LDC – Covid-secure voting at the May elections (County councillor and Fire, Police & Crime Commissioner) including registering for a vote by 19<sup>th</sup> April or for a postal vote by 20<sup>th</sup> April or a proxy vote by 27<sup>th</sup> April (Email)
- d) Keep Britain Tidy – The Great British Spring Clean between 28<sup>th</sup> May and 13<sup>th</sup> June and charity webshop for buying equipment (Email)
- e) Stafford Samaritans – Request for a donation (Email, circulated to cllrs) – PC used to regularly support and agreed to make a donation of £50 (Clerk).
- f) SCC – ‘Let’s Beat Loneliness Together’ campaign, information pack and survey (Email)
- g) CCDC – Consultation on Cannock Chase Local Plan, Preferred Options and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal, open till 30<sup>th</sup> April (Email)
- h) LDC - Business start-up grants of £3,000 to local residents who have been made redundant or are out of work, and planning to start a business over the next year; also SCC’s various Back to Business support schemes (Email)
- i) SPCA – Regular weekly bulletins including updates on legality of virtual meetings (Email)
- j) LDC – Consultation on Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (Email)
- k) TGM – Letter of acceptance and current insurance certificates for 2021 grass cutting (Email)

## 13. Committees

To receive any update from Burial Ground Committee – John Carter had resigned on moving from village so a new parishioner representative to be sought (Clerk)

## 14. Finance and audit

- a) To note receipt of the Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) form and guidance for 2020/21 from the external auditors Mazars, with submission deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June – Mel Havelock-Crozier to ask church and school if they could offer a potential venue for a face to face PC meeting in early June to enable approval of the AGAR. Clerk to also ask Alan Toplis if internal audit could be completed in time for virtual May PC meeting.
- b) To consider Internal Auditor’s recommendations regarding War Memorial including regular inspection and estimate of re-instatement value for insurance – Sarah Plater offered to do a brief monthly inspection if Clerk put as regular item on each agenda. PC agreed that poppies could now be removed. Clerk to seek a professional inspection including re-instatement value, with Bridgemans in Lichfield, Walkers of Cannock or a contact via NMA being suggested.
- c) To agree the appointment of an internal auditor for 2021/22 - PC agreed to ask Alan Toplis to continue (Clerk).
- d) To review the Risk Assessment – Clerk had circulated risk assessment with some comments and suggested amendments shortly before the meeting. All

**councillors** to read and review at the next meeting. **Clerk** to ask SPCA/NALC for any Covid and other risk assessments.

- e) To decide if any amendments are needed to Financial Regulations following the interim audit and/or for additional powers to be delegated to the Clerk to keep essential services running in unforeseen circumstances such as the Covid pandemic – **Clerk** to circulate the omitted sections of NALC template (about quotes and tenders) which internal auditor had suggested should be added back in.
- f) To update bank mandate to include new councillors – **Clerk** to obtain details from new councillors and progress this.

#### 15. Parish Council matters

- a) To consider adoption of the Local Government Association's new Model Councillor Code of Conduct, supported by NALC – Although very lengthy, PC agreed to adopt the new Code as it stands (**Clerk**).
- b) To update on progress with renewal of Heathway grazing licence – Approved copy for signature awaited from Hinson Parry (**Clerk** to chase).
- c) To consider arrangements for duck race in village in 2021 – PC agreed to hold race, subject to flow of brook under bridge being improved (**Noel Talbot** to plan).
- d) To update on request from parishioner as to whether there is any land in the parish that could be made available for allotments – PC is awaiting feedback from Parish Lands Trust when they have held their next meeting.
- e) To consider any response for volunteer to arrange another hanging basket competition – In absence of another volunteer, **Mel Havelock-Crozier** offered to organise.
- f) To register any interest in SPCA training courses – Councillors can view course list on SPCA database and book courses, arranging for bill to be sent to Clerk.
- g) To discuss possible arrangements to prevent parking damage to area of common land by brook (in front of new vicarage) – Several parishioners had commented on damage to grass. PC agreed to monitor for time being.
- h) To agree a request to SCC regarding catchment area of proposed new secondary school on Rugeley Power Station development site and its implications for Colton – **Clerk** to ask SCC about catchment area and school transport.
- i) To consider who might be appointed PC representatives on the Burial Ground Committee (BGC) and Village Hall Management Committee at the Annual Meeting in May – Appointments are normally agreed at Annual Meeting so **councillors** were asked to consider if they would volunteer then. Mel Havelock-Crozier offered to join BGC and Emma Godwin was prepared to continue. **Clerk** to check charity deeds for required membership of BGC.
- j) To discuss arrangements for meetings after 7<sup>th</sup> May when virtual meetings are no longer permitted for parish councils – Government had recently said it would not be extending the legislation permitting virtual meetings. June PC meeting would normally be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June but Village Hall not re-opening until 21<sup>st</sup> June. PC agreed to review position in May as various bodies were applying pressure for virtual meetings to continue.
- k) To note date of next PC meeting – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm by Zoom, to include Annual Meeting.

Close of meeting 9:40pm