

COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 1st MARCH 2023

AT 7:30 PM AT COLTON VILLAGE HALL

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Maximum of 20 mins at the beginning of the meeting to hear public questions and comments) – No matters raised.

(No member of the public may address the meeting hereafter)

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. To note attendance and receive apologies for absence

In attendance were Cllrs Noel Talbot (NT), who chaired the meeting, Richard Birkin (RB), Mel Havelock-Crozier (MH-C) and Nigel Parry (NP) and Clerk Alison James. Apologies were received from Cllr David Grewer and District Councillor Shirley Barnett. 3 members of the public observed.

2. To receive declarations of interest - None

3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on 1st February – Approved and signed at end of meeting.

4. Chairman's Announcements - None

5. Payments

a) To approve the following payments:

i)	1938	Colton Village Hall – Room hire for Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb & Mar meetings (12.00 each)	£60.00
ii)	1939	TGM – Gritting of High St and various side streets on 18 January (75.00) plus VAT	£90.00
iii)	1940	SPCA – Clerk's elections training course (30.00) plus VAT	£36.00
iv)	1941	Alison James – Clerk's salary, March (336.13); Home working expenses, 4 weeks, 4 Feb – 3 Mar (16.00); Reimbursement for set of printer cartridges (40.68 incl VAT); Reimbursement for bank payment on 23 Feb to magazine delivery girl for March (20.00)	£412.81
v)	1942	HMRC – Payroll taxes, Jan – Mar	£279.59

(Total of new payments above is £878.40)

All payments above were approved. NP reported from recent VHMC meeting that cost of Bellamour Room hire would rise to £15 from 1st April.

6. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required including

- Flooding issues including land ownership/tree planting and flooding at top of High Street/Newlands Lane – It was noted that Emma Godwin and other parishioners had been communicating further with HS2 about the flooding on Newlands Lane but so far HS2 were not accepting any responsibility.
- Initiative to progress projects and applications for funding from Community and Environment Fund – NP reported that, after confusion about February meeting date, another meeting had been arranged for 14th March and Balfour Beatty representative had confirmed her attendance. More ideas had been put forward for potential funding applications.

7. Planning Matters

- To note any applications received and make observations to the Planning Authority: None received.

- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority:
 - i) 22/01686/FUH – Greenways, Colton Rd, Colton – Erection of ground and first floor rear and side extensions - Approved

8. Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

- a) To report on progress and agree any action required:
 - i) Any flooding or drain issues – Blocked drain near brook bridge - With help from parishioner to pinpoint locations, Clerk had sent photos to Highways as they had replied to initial online report saying they could not find any problem. **Clerk** was asked to follow up again if nothing further heard before next meeting.
 - ii) Rats at Stockwell Heath pond - Any update from LDC Environmental Health – No further update yet received from LDC and some other options were discussed but not to be pursued yet.
 - iii) Erosion of path alongside Moreton Brook - Enquiries about land ownership and possible landscaping options – NP reported that PLT chairman is meeting Environment Agency to talk about piling along footpath and PLT may support this.
 - iv) Litter picking event on Saturday 8th April – PC is funding refreshments at the Greyhound afterwards for those taking part. LDC are prepared to loan 12-15 sets of equipment, which need to be collected from LDC depot in Burntwood nearer the day. MH-C offered to collect if Clerk is not able to and provides details.
 - v) Mud at side of Bellamour Lane near Bellamour Corner – LDC have said they will be road sweeping there, though no date specified. It was thought more substantial work than that may be required.
 - vi) Additional road gritting – The cost of £75 for the recent occasion was thought to be good value and worthwhile repeating if required.
 - vii) Parking issues in the village – Article had been put in March magazine but it was considered that the parking had got worse, particularly in the evenings. RB said parking is now an LDC matter, not one for police, unless a public safety issue. Further ideas were discussed but it was agreed to see response to article and keep the item on the agenda for now (**Clerk**).

9. To consider progress on installation of new village signs

Contractor previously approached had now said he had other work and did not want to do the installation. PC therefore reluctantly agreed, despite the significantly higher cost, that **Clerk** should ask SCC to instruct their contractor, confirming the cost including construction of the signs.

10. To discuss action on Climate Change and working towards Carbon Neutral Colton

NP confirmed that street lights had all been converted to LED bar one. He had also asked if the 'Carbon Bubble' being promoted by the Staffs Sustainability Board, formed by SCC, LDC and others, could visit Colton and had asked to be kept in touch with their various initiatives.

11. To consider progress on reducing dog fouling around village

Problem had worsened recently. Dummy CCTV cameras and banners were suggested. **NP** and **Clerk** to contact PLT chairman/PLT Clerk about banners and bag dispensers on the Martlins.

12. Correspondence

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

- a) Balfour Beatty – Notice of Saturday working in March for tree planting as part of Early Environmental Works on land off Jonghams Lane and land off Newlands Lane (Emails, circulated to cllrs)
- b) Kier – General newsletter notifying of soil sampling surveys to be carried out near the route (no Colton-specific information) between February and August 2023 (Email)
- c) SCC – Consultation on updated Flood Risk Management Strategy to minimise and mitigate flood risk in the county with closing date of 20th March (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- d) LDC – Invitation to workshops on Lichfield District Design Code (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- e) SCC – Briefing on 16th February about potential SCC boundary changes (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- f) SLCC – Bulletin including Environmental Planning guidance document and Tree Council's Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit for local authorities (Email, sent to NP re Climate Change work)
- g) Rural Services Network - Rural Cost of Living Survey: further responses encouraged (Email, circulated to PC distribution list and poster for noticeboard)
- h) Keep Britain Tidy – Invitation to join the Great British Spring Clean between 17 March and 2 April (Email)
- i) SPCA – Weekly bulletins (Emails, circulated to cllrs)

13. Committees

To discuss future arrangements for managing the burial grounds and the Burial Ground Committee including approach suggested by Cllr Noel Talbot – (This item was taken at the end of the meeting to allow full discussion)

The BGC had not been able to meet for some time and did not have sufficient members, particularly councillors. Councillors, as well as a relative, had highlighted maintenance issues and it was agreed that a safety inspection was due. NT had suggested a new approach that all councillors should be on BGC and meetings should be held quarterly before PC meetings to ensure sufficient attendance and support without councillors having to commit an extra evening. **Clerk** to contact BGC members to explain proposal and circulate charity deed to councillors. Article to be put in magazine and MH-C suggested organising a tidy up by willing volunteers on Monday 8th May as part of Coronation weekend and 'The Big Help Out' national day of volunteering.

14. Finance and audit

- a) To receive latest report of income and expenditure against budget for the financial year to date – Report was accepted, though it was noted that money given for Jubilee celebrations had not all been spent (see item 15 d)).
- b) To agree any earmarking of reserves at the end of the financial year – PC agreed money to be earmarked or taken from those reserves in line with the proposals circulated by Clerk before meeting.
- c) To confirm terms of instruction of contractors for grounds maintenance for 2023 season – It was noted that contractor had cut verges recently. **Clerk** to circulate contract details before next meeting, particularly to clarify details of work specified for spring and autumn.

- d) To hear any progress on options for setting up internet banking – PC agreed that this should be deferred until new council in place after elections.
- e) To hear report on actions from PC's risk assessment – **Clerk** had been unable to progress this since last meeting and was asked to pursue.

15. Parish Council matters

- a) To prepare for May 2023 parish elections – Nothing had yet been heard from LDC about arrangements but Clerk had attended an SPCA course and understood the deadline for candidate applications was 4th April, before next PC meeting. She also understood applications may have to be hand delivered. **Clerk** to contact LDC urgently for details and **Councillors** to consider if they wish to stand for re-election and what will be required to submit their application. MH-C said that she would stay on PC till elections but would not stand again due to a change in circumstances.
- b) To agree business continuity plan post-election including suggested resolution that current bank signatories are able to continue signing cheques authorised for payment by the new council until such time as the bank mandate can be updated – PC approved the suggested resolution, although it was hoped that sufficient signatories would still be on PC after the elections.
- c) To consider nominations for PC representatives on Parish Lands Trust – The 2 current PC representatives Sue Pope and Tony Winter are willing to continue when their terms end in June and PC agreed to support them continuing. PC felt it was now more aware of PLT objectives and activities but wanted to request some feedback during the year, either via Public Participation or on agenda (**Clerk** to inform PLT).
- d) To further discuss arrangements for a village event to celebrate the Coronation – MH-C reported plans for a Saturday night bonfire, bring your own picnic and sports on the Sunday followed by an evening ceilidh then a community event for Village Hall works and other tidying on the Monday. PC understands it is due about £600 back from its £1000 donation for Jubilee events but, in view of the imminent end of the financial year, PC agreed to leave this money with VHMC for the Coronation events and that £400 of this could be spent on the ceilidh. **Clerk** to update VHMC treasurer and ask for confirmation of Jubilee spend and balance remaining.
- e) Date of next meeting – Wednesday 5th April at 7.30pm
NP offered apologies for April and May (if re-elected).
Meeting closed at 9:00pm.