

COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 5th JULY 2023

AT 7:00 PM AT COLTON VILLAGE HALL

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

RB raised several points from a parishioner and others were raised in discussion:

Parking on High St – Several cars from 1 property are parking near the roundabout. Others are unable to park outside their houses, including some disabled.

It was stressed that no one has a right to park outside their own home as it is a public highway. If someone is disabled, they may be able to apply for a specific disabled space. **KV** agreed to ask at LDC about requirements and procedures for this.

Overgrown hedge on Hollow Lane – discussed at agenda item 8 a) iii).

HS2 contractor using High St – Parishioner had contacted Liz Davis and **Clerk** to do same.

Drains still blocked at top of High St – This is presumably due to HS2 works. **Clerk** to raise with Liz Davis too.

Parking near Moor Croft – **RB** to seek advice on possibilities for enforcement e.g. notices on cars or lamp posts. One resident had already been asked not to park opposite the end of Moor Croft, particularly in icy weather, without much success.

Parishioner – Commented on how nice to finally see the new Colton signs in place. **Clerk** to consider putting something on the website or social media about them.

At the end of the meeting, a further matter was raised by another parishioner living on Bellamour Way. After heavy rain, the sewage pipe backs up and sewage comes up through a manhole cover on his drive. He had done various work a few years ago but is concerned that it will recur with increased frequency. Severn Trent had said that the pipe is not wide enough to cope with the volume of sewage and that he should contact SCC. He wondered if others were having similar issues and hoped that collective effort might yield more success in dealing with the problem.

KV said that there had been similar problems in Hill Ridware, that it is Severn Trent's responsibility and that Hill Ridware had achieved some success. **KV** to ask contacts there for details of their actions and pass back to parishioner.

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. To note attendance and receive apologies for absence

In attendance were Councillors Nigel Parry (NP), who chaired this meeting, Richard Birkin (RB) and Garren Edwards (GE), District Councillor Keith Vernon (KV), who was welcomed for first time since his election and Clerk Alison James. Apologies were received from Cllr Noel Talbot and County Cllr Richard Cox. 3 members of the public observed some or all of the meeting.

2. To receive declarations of interest - None

3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on 7th June – Approved and signed by NP.

4. Chairman's Announcements - None

5. Payments

a) To note the following payments approved additionally at the last meeting:

- i) 1957 TGM - Replace cheque 1947 for March & April
grass cutting as rejected by bank for
illegible date

£468.42

- ii) 1958 Colton Burial Ground Admin Committee – Funding for Burial Ground maintenance 23/24 as agreed at BGC meeting on 7 June £1,500.00
 - b) To approve the following payments:
 - i) 1959 Colton Village Hall – Room hire for 5 meetings including Parish Assembly, Apr - Jul £75.00
 - ii) 1960 Alison James – Clerk’s salary, July (336.13); Home working expenses, 4 weeks, 10 Jun-7 Jul (16.00); Reimbursement for bank payment on 28 June to magazine delivery girl for July (20.00); Reimbursement for replacement solid state drive & labour from Burntwood Computer Centre for PC laptop (143.33 plus VAT 28.66); BGC Clerk salary for 1 Apr – 30 Jun (137.50) less tax (27.50) £654.12
 - iii) 1961 SCC - Installation of 3 village signs & disposal of old signs (no VAT) £3,458.54
 - iv) 1962 TGM – Grass cutting in June – invoice expected after issue of agenda but before meeting – amount t.b.c.

(Total of new payments at item b) above is £4,187.66 plus TGM invoice).

Above payments were approved, including cheque 1962 in the sum of £489.66, as invoice received just after agenda issued. It was higher than usual as it included the occasional cuts of Heathway footpath, verge from bridge to Colton Rd and area by brook bridge, as well as the cuts at regular sites.

- c) To note the following payments which are likely to be required in August and authorise them to be approved by email when received and then ratified at September meeting:
 - i) TGM for grass cutting in July
 - ii) Clerk’s PC salary and reimbursements for August
 - iii) Any other payments falling due, provided in line with approved budget

Likely payments were noted and **Clerk** would contact Cllrs by email for approval.

6. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required including

- a) Any further updates about HS2 Phase 2a – Nothing further to report
- b) Initiative to progress projects and applications for funding from Community and Environment Fund including update from Richard Cox re grants available – After a query raised at the Parish Assembly, Richard Cox had confirmed that HS2 funding does not require match funding e.g. for any application for Village Hall. 3 councillors had met informally to discuss the ideas for applications, narrowed them down to 4 projects and would be drafting some proposals for a meeting with Liz Davis in September. The 4 projects were Green energy options e.g. solar panels at Village Hall; Cycle path to Rugeley Trent Valley and associated ideas such as cycle store and safe crossing point; Digitising History Society records; Additional defibrillator for top end of village, possibly a spare from Balfour Beatty.

7. Planning Matters

- a) To note any applications received and make observations to the Planning Authority: None received by time of issue of agenda or subsequently.
- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority:

- i) 23/00480/FUL – Middle Cottage, Bellamour Lane, Colton – Installation of 30 free standing PVs (solar panels) on paddock adjacent to Middle Cottage - Approved
- ii) 23/00190/COU – 8 Old Wood Farm, Blithbury Rd, Colton – Conversion and alteration of agricultural buildings to form 1 dwelling and ancillary annex – To be determined at LDC's Planning Committee on 3 July – **Clerk** to check the decision. It was thought it had been called in as SCC Highways had objected. They had said it was unsustainable development because there was no footpath or transport other than a car. KV said SCC had recently been objecting to other applications on those grounds.

8. Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

- a) To report on progress and agree any action required:
 - i) Flooding or drain issues – No further problems noted recently for drain near brook bridge since SCC said they had cleaned it out.
 - ii) Parking issues in the village – discussed during Public Participation.
 - iii) Overgrown hedge at Aspley House – This had been raised by a parishioner and PC agreed that it was growing substantially into the road. **Cllrs** to contact nearby residents to try to establish the landowners so that **Clerk** could write. Otherwise it would need to be escalated with SCC.
 - iv) Potential joint hire of road sweeper with PCC and Burial Ground Committee – Mel Havelock-Crozier had sent some costings obtained from a contractor for a minimum of 3 hours work including travel time. PC thought it could be useful to do additional sweeping on mossy pavement at top of High St and to raise at next BGC meeting for path in Burial Ground, perhaps for late summer. **Clerk** to reply seeking further details.

9. To consider progress on installation of new village signs

The signs had finally been installed by SCC's contractors on 16th June, with only a day's notice given of the proposed installation date. Cllrs had therefore agreed to go ahead, for fear of further delay if they put off. This despite having just started pursuing possible installation by HS2 contractors at lower cost as they had recently been told had been done for Mavesyn Ridware PC. Response to the new signs had been positive.

10. To consider progress on reducing dog fouling around village

To agree purchase of bag dispensers – PLT had agreed to a trial of some dispensers, with 2 proposed sites being by bin near gate to the side of the brook and bin on Martlin Lane at entrance to Lower Martlins. Clerk had circulated some options from her research and GE proposed a particular type of dispenser, which could apparently be easily fitted to a fence or post, which would save more complicated or expensive installation. Recycled plastic bags were recommended and would also be purchased in appropriate bulk. PC approved these ideas so **GE** agreed to check installation details and **Clerk** to update PLT.

11. Correspondence

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

- a) Staffordshire Sustainability Board – 'Climate Change consultation 2023: Let's talk Staffordshire' for anyone to respond on what they think about climate change and the barriers that stop people being greener (Email, circulated to cllrs)

- b) SCC – Road closure notice for B5013 Colton Rd within 30m either side of railway bridge, for bridge examination works, overnight on Sunday 20th August from 10pm to 5am (Email)
- c) SPCA – Weekly bulletins (Emails, circulated to cllrs) - **Clerk** to book GE for SPCA's Councillor Fundamentals webinar.

12. Committees

To note any update from Burial Ground Committee – **Clerk** had received 2 memorial applications for approval and signature.

13. Finance and audit

- a) To note the submission of the Certificate of Exemption (AGAR 2022/23 Form 2 page 3) to external auditors Mazars on 18th June – Noted, with required information now on noticeboard and website.
- b) To note the acceptance of appointment from Kim Squires Internal Audit Services as internal auditor for 2023/24 – Kim Squires would continue as auditor and be able to seek advice from Alan Toplis when required.
- c) To authorise Clerk to renew McAfee anti-virus subscription for PC laptop for 2 years (likely cost of £129.99) before mid September – PC agreed that **Clerk** should renew.
- d) To hear progress on update of bank mandate and options for internet banking – Clerk had instigated process for adding GE to NatWest mandate and **NP** and then **GE** needed to upload digital signatures. NatWest are also setting up a free version of their Bankline system for community organisations, which PC would qualify for when it becomes available – **Clerk** to monitor their website to see when application form is added.
- e) To hear update on actions from review of PC's risk assessment – Clerk had completed an action to prepare notes about systems and passwords, in the event of an unexpected absence and had added notes about the tasks required on a monthly, annual and ad-hoc basis. NP was given a copy and further paper copies to be distributed to other councillors (**Clerk**). **GE** commented that PC could benefit from a system for secure document transmission and offered to research some options for that and cloud storage generally. **Clerk** to ask SPCA for guidance too.

14. Parish Council matters

- a) To review any progress in recruiting new councillors including posters – Posters were commended and 1 parishioner expressed willingness to become a councillor. **Clerk** to send various information with a view to co-option at the September meeting.
- b) To discuss ideas to raise profile of PC on social media and with younger generation – Raised at previous meeting and it was felt that PC would benefit from having some younger members, who might be able to do more on social media.

KV offered some feedback from LDC and in particular the issue of pedestrianisation in Lichfield city centre, which he and others were very concerned about. He felt there was insufficient parking and especially for those requiring disabled parking spaces, which was impacting city centre traders.
- c) Date of next meeting – Wednesday 6th September (at 7.30pm approximately, after Burial Ground Committee meeting at 7pm). No meeting in August.

Meeting closed at 8:50pm