

COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 4th OCTOBER 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)

Planned discussion about whether PC organises or co-ordinates an annual parish event, like those held for the Jubilee and Coronation – Deferred to next meeting as no-one had attended to contribute to that discussion. PC agreed the need to increase advertising, with suggestion to contact school and use Colton Village page on Facebook (**Cllrs and Clerk**).

Community Speed Watch (CSW) – After issue raised at September meeting, Clerk had obtained up to date information from police and circulated to councillors and a parishioner. He had contacted police co-ordinator and was prepared to sign up as a volunteer. Further volunteers would be needed (3 are needed per CSW session), funding would need to be sought for equipment (about £500) and training would need to be undertaken either locally or at Police HQ in Stafford.

Chair emphasised that evidential proof is needed of numbers driving over speed limit. Councillors had also discussed other ideas such as electronic speed indicator devices. **NP** agreed to investigate options further as he has contacts in that industry. Permission would need to be obtained from SCC for anything to be put on the highway.

Concern was expressed about vehicles being driven at speed through the ford by the brook bridge, with potential for damage to the gas pipe there and disturbance to the water main. **Clerk** to follow up with gas and water companies.

Another parishioner questioned whether large wagons are using the village as a shortcut. It was stated that details of the relevant companies needed to be noted to enable PC to follow up.

Another parishioner observed that road sweeper does not tackle the right hand side of High St and that tarmac is covered in weeds so it is not safe to walk on. **Clerk** to follow up with SCC or LDC.

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), Garren Edwards (GE), Nigel Parry (NP) and Lynne Richardson (LR), County Cllr Richard Cox (RC), District Cllr Keith Vernon (KV) (after Public Participation) and Clerk Alison James. 15 members of the public observed.

2. To receive declarations of interest – None.

3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on 6th September – Approved and signed.

4. Chairman's Announcements

All at the village school were congratulated on the recent 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating. Also it was noted that HS2 Phase 2a had been cancelled, which was good news for Colton. However RC commented that, although the media had reported HS2 as now finishing at Birmingham, Phase 1 would continue as planned. This meant that construction would continue to Handsacre Junction where HS2 would join the West Coast main line and so works would also continue at Streethay and Fradley. It was also commented that certain land may remain safeguarded in case the project was restarted at some later time and further clarification is being sought by SCC.

5. Payments

- a) To note the confirmed amount and details of payments approved at the last meeting:
- i) 1968 TGM – Grass cutting in August – Village Hall, 1 cut (94.75); Closed BG, 2 cuts (92.70); Stockwell Heath, 2 cuts (61.80) plus VAT (49.85) £299.10
 - ii) 1969 St Mary's Church – Contribution to parish magazine costs for 2023 £1,300.00
- b) To approve the following payments:
- i) 1970 SLCC – Annual membership for Clerk to 31/10/24 £112.00
 - ii) 1971 Colton Village Hall – Donation in lieu of wreath and in gratitude for long service of Dorothy Bradbury to BGC £30.00
 - iii) 1972 Alison James – Clerk's salary, October (336.13); Home working expenses, 3 weeks, 9 Sep – 6 Oct excluding 1 week's leave (12.00); Reimbursement for bank payment set up for 28 Sep to magazine delivery girl for October (20.00); BGC Clerk salary, 1 Jul – 30 Sep (137.50) less tax (27.50) £478.13
 - iv) 1973 HMRC – Payroll taxes for Q2, Jul – Sep £279.59
 - v) 1974 CPRE – Annual membership 23/24 £29.00
 - vi) 1975 TGM – Grass cutting in September – invoice expected after early issue of agenda but before meeting – amount t.b.c. – Cheque not written for this.

(Total of payments at item a) is £1,599.10 and new payments at item b) is £928.72 plus 1 invoice t.b.c.)

No invoice had yet been received from TGM so cheque number 1975 was released for other use. All other payments were approved as above.

6. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required including

- a) Initiative to progress projects and applications for funding from Community and Environment Fund – Proposed further meeting with HS2 and Balfour Beatty in October – Despite cancellation of Phase 2a, RC thought that HS2 still had certain commitments to community funding and encouraged applications to be made where possible. NP believed meeting was still going ahead and would shed light on latest position.

7. Planning Matters

- a) To note any applications received and make observations to the Planning Authority:
- i) 23/00815/FUH – 5 Coachmans Walk, Bellamour Way, Colton – Erection of single storey rear extension (and a first floor side roof dormer extension to existing side roof dormers) (Notified on day of last PC meeting so deadline for comments has now passed)
- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority: None notified
- c) To hear any update from LDC on application 23/00315/FUL – 6 Williscroft Place, Bellamour Way, Colton – New vehicular access and the provision of hard standing for vehicular parking – Clerk had received update from LDC explaining an amendment in wording of application, hence further notice had been displayed recently but period for additional comments had now passed.

Another resident at Williscroft Place had received a letter from LDC saying that their wall was in a dangerous condition and needed to be rectified.

8. Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

- a) To report on new issues or progress and agree any action required:
 - i) Flooding – Email from parishioner of 19 September suggesting works to clear underneath the brook bridge - NT said that it is a gravel bed under the bridge, not silt and that the 3 arches are clear. So substantial mechanical work would be needed to make any difference. This was unlike the work recently undertaken by PLT and PC did not feel it was necessary.
 - ii) Parking issues in the village – Article spelling out Highway Code for parking had been included in latest parish magazine but had not so far had any effect. RB had spoken to LDC enforcement, who can only act on civil matters. To deal with parking on pavements or illegally near junctions it would be necessary to take up with the police.
 - iii) Potential joint hire of road sweeper with PCC and Burial Ground Committee – **Clerk** still to make enquiries.
 - iv) Overgrown state of Narrow Lane (at end of Heathway) – A parishioner had given details of the adjacent landowners to the Clerk and NP had also spoken to one landowner. **Clerk** to write to landowners asking them to cut hedges back to boundary.
 - v) Fly tipping at Stockwell Heath – A parishioner had reported various items of fly tipping on Sherracop Lane, at Sherracop Plantation and on Newlands Lane. Some is on private land so LDC would not remove.
 - vi) Issue of speeding in the village raised by parishioners at September meeting and suggested set up of Community Speed Watch – covered under Public Participation.
 - vii) Potential action to clear and maintain local rights of way – GE had contacted SCC and concluded that our own volunteers would be needed to make significant progress e.g. to tackle nettles on path by brook and cut back path across field to Rugeley Trent Valley. It was suggested that an event could be organised which PC would support with butties and hot drinks afterwards, similar to litter pick arranged previously.
 - viii) Condition of bench near the phone box – **RB** had raised this and would examine to see if it could be refurbished.
 - ix) Improving the appearance of the parish including ways to reduce litter alongside B5013, idea of parish handyman etc. – RB had spoken to LDC about the amount of litter but evidence is needed for enforcement. Another litter picking event was suggested. Also PC agreed to put an advert in the parish magazine and on social media for a handyman at a reasonable pay rate to tackle various jobs (**Cllrs and Clerk**).
 - x) Inappropriate waste and bins obstructing pavement near bottom of High St – **LR** offered to speak to owners to ask them to move the bins and dispose of rubbish.
 - xi) Continuing problem with water leak on pavement outside Williscroft Place – Work had been done by South Staffs Water (SSW) and then Highways since last meeting but water still seeping out. **Clerk** to contact SSW.

9. To consider PLT suggestion of setting up a community garden

Email received after last PLT meeting, suggesting PLT could find some land and was looking for project support and interest. **LR** to raise with Produce Guild.

10.To consider progress on reducing dog fouling around village

To hear update on installation of bag dispensers – **GE** had ordered 2 dispensers and, with **RB**, would arrange installation. **Clerk** to arrange reimbursement of **GE**.

11. To discuss ideas to raise profile of PC on social media and with younger generation

Ideas were invited from parishioners present and a suggestion was made to set up a youth group, along the lines of one that used to run a number of years ago. **PC** to ask a parishioner to speak to school and see what support there might be.

12.To discuss any further arrangements for Remembrance Sunday (12th November)

LR offered to order PC wreath via her links with Royal British Legion.

13.Correspondence

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

- a) 20's plenty for Staffordshire - Zoom presentation to parish councils about '20 is plenty' initiative for residential and other areas on Wednesday 11th October at 7.30pm (Email, circulated to cllrs) – **GE** had offered to join the Zoom presentation and would ask for a recorded copy or slides. There were links with earlier discussions about speeding. RC said this initiative was coming from a campaign group and SCC was unlikely to support it for various reasons. Implementation in Wales had caused lots of problems.
- b) LDC – Consultation on 'Lichfield District 2050' and in particular its strategy for Green Communities (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- c) LDC, Inspector and VHMC – Annual play area inspection arranged in September (Emails)
- d) Slow Ways – Seeking councils' help to connect the community to the Slow Ways national walking network (Email)
- e) SPCA – Weekly bulletins (Emails, circulated to cllrs)

14.Committees

To note any update from Burial Ground Committee – Bill just received for mole treatments and restoring gate to compound.

15.Finance and audit

- a) To note the return of £61.88 from VHMC, being unspent balance of PC's Jubilee/Coronation contribution – Noted.
- b) To hear update on new grazing licence from beginning of October – Licensee wishes to continue and **Clerk** is awaiting response from Hinson Parry regarding updated licence and will chase as required.
- c) To hear any update on internet banking – NatWest still not accepting new applications for its Bankline for Communities (**Clerk** to continue to monitor).
- d) To hear update on actions from review of PC's risk assessment – Storage in Village Hall loft – **Clerk** has now been given key for what is thought to be PC cabinet in loft and is gathering files and documents for storage and will arrange with VHMC.

16.Date of next meeting – Wednesday 1st November

NP and KV gave their apologies.

PC suggested budget discussion should be held before December PC meeting with BGC meeting deferred to January (**Clerk** to arrange with other BGC members).

Meeting closed at 8.30pm