

## COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> JANUARY 2024

AT 7:30 PM (APPROXIMATELY) AT COLTON VILLAGE HALL

(following Burial Ground Committee meeting)

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

Discussions were held about the recent issues with flooded roads and reduced or no access in and out of the village. Councillors had already been discussing by email and had agreed that urgent action was needed. A letter had recently been sent to David Williams, the County Council Cabinet member responsible for Highways, asking for a strategic review and a regular maintenance schedule. Parishioners present suggested calling a public meeting and inviting SCC Highways, County Cllr Richard Cox, Environment Agency, Parish Lands Trust and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to contribute plus writing to MP Michael Fabricant. Comments were also made about the potential impact of HS2 works. It may be appropriate to include an article in the magazine so that other parishioners are aware of the action being taken by the PC as many were understandably frustrated by the situation.

### **BUSINESS AGENDA**

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

In attendance were Councillors Noel Talbot (NT), who chaired the meeting, Garren Edwards (GE), Nigel Parry (NP) and Lynne Richardson (LR) and Clerk Alison James (who arrived during Public Participation). Apologies were received from County Cllr Richard Cox (due to flooded roads) and District Cllr Keith Vernon (illness). 3 members of the public attended Public Participation only and 1 observed the whole meeting.

#### 2. To receive declarations of interest - None

#### 3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December – Approved and signed.

#### 4. Chairman's Announcements

**Clerk** was asked to send letter of thanks to Mick Godwin for speedily removing the fallen tree at Moor Lane to enable an exit route from the village.

#### 5. Payments

##### a) To confirm details of following payment agreed at December meeting:

i)	1985	St Mary's Church – Contribution to 2023 costs of mowing Pedley's Croft	£200.00
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##### b) To approve the following payments:

i)	1986	TGM – Grounds maintenance in November – Closed BG – Hedge cut (92.70) and strimming of wildlife area (61.80) plus VAT (30.90)	£185.40
ii)	1987	M.B. Contracts – Strimming of footpath from Colton to Rugeley (50.00) plus VAT (10.00)	£60.00
iii)	1988	Alison James – Clerk's salary, January (356.93) Home working expenses, 3 weeks, 9 Dec – 5 Jan excl. 1 week of leave (12.00); Reimbursement for bank payment to magazine delivery girl for January, set up for 28 Dec (20.00); BGC Clerk salary for 1 Oct – 31 Dec (137.50) less tax (27.50)	£498.93

(Total of new payments for approval is £744.33)

All the above payments were approved.

## 6. HS2

To consider any developments and agree any action required, including update on annual Phase 2a Highways Subgroup meeting – Annual Highways subgroup meeting had been postponed pending clarification of impact of cancellation of Phase 2a. Item to be removed from future agenda until any further issues arise (**Clerk**).

## 7. Planning Matters

- a) To note any applications received and make observations to the Planning Authority: None had been received.
- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority:
  - i) 23/00263/FUL – 1 Lea Croft, Colton – Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of replacement dwelling and garage block – Approved (based on amended plans of October and November 2023 and with certain conditions)

## 8. Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

- a) To report on new issues or progress and agree any action required:
  - i) Flooding – any further issues – NT had discussed the recent issues with Richard Cox. Subject to any response from David Williams to the PC's recent letter, it was agreed that a public meeting should be called, as discussed in Public Participation.
  - ii) Parking issues in the village – **NT** was still to speak to Richard Birkin about options for action. Other alternatives were discussed including seeking an appropriate wording for notices to be put on vehicles.
  - iii) Potential joint hire of road sweeper with PCC and Burial Ground Committee – It was suggested this be taken off the agenda unless it was raised again by PCC (**Clerk**).
  - iv) State of Narrow Lane (at end of Heathway) – Landowner had cut hedges on one side and cut of other side is pending. Parishioner had pointed out importance of keeping Narrow Lane accessible in case top of High Street was flooded. **Clerk** to seek quote for clearing the mud down the middle of the lane from the Border Collie Trust to the junction with Newlands Lane.
  - v) Issue of speeding in the village raised by parishioners, suggested set up of Community Speed Watch and other potential measures to reduce speeding – **NP** was chasing up response from SCC contact to viability of installing certain speed monitoring devices and was also awaiting prices from a potential supplier and hoped to have them both by next meeting.
  - vi) Action to clear and maintain local rights of way – **Clerk** to take off agenda now as not an issue at this time of year and could in future be dealt with under item 8 a) viii).
  - vii) Condition of benches near the phone box and the Closed Burial Ground – Another handyperson had been asked to quote for repairs to the benches and had said he would be in touch in early January to arrange a time to meet. He had also been asked to repair the lock on the noticeboard near the village hall but Clerk held the only key. PC approved the order of some additional keys.
  - viii) Improving the appearance of the parish and jobs for parish handyperson – Nothing further to report.
  - ix) Parking arrangements in the vicinity of the school at start and finish times – **Clerk** to incorporate councillors' comments on the draft letter about concerns with parking and send to school.

9. To discuss progress on arrangements for a parish event in June 2024 including potential meeting of those involved

PC had arranged a meeting on Tuesday 9 January for interested parties to discuss arrangements.

10. To consider progress on reducing dog fouling around village

GE said that dispensers have needed refilling on several occasions so it appears that bags are being used. **Clerk** to take item off agenda now.

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

One person might be able to offer some ideas and help with social media but was unable to give greater commitment for the foreseeable future.

12. Correspondence

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

- a) Staffs Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime - Have your say on the amount you pay towards Police and Fire & Rescue services in Staffordshire – consultation with closing date of 4<sup>th</sup> January (Email, circulated to cllrs)
- b) Community Foundation for Staffs – Winter update newsletter (Email)
- c) Keep Britain Tidy – January is 'Buy nothing new' month (Email)
- d) SPCA – Weekly bulletins including training programme for 2024 (Emails, circulated to cllrs)

13. Committees

To note any update from Burial Ground Committee following prior meeting – No further funding from PC required at present.

14. Finance and audit

- a) To hear report from Clerk on progress with interim audit by internal auditor – Following various complications with arranging a mutually convenient time, it was hoped that the interim audit work could be carried out in the next week (**Clerk**).
- b) To sign proposed 2024/25 precept request to LDC for submission by deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> January – NT, as chair of recent meetings, signed the prepared form for the previously agreed precept of £15,000, which **Clerk** would submit to LDC.
- c) To hear update on latest grazing licence from October – **Clerk** to try Hinson Parry again to try to ensure that licence is properly prepared to be legally binding and to ask for it to potentially cover 2 years in view of delay.
- d) To hear any update on banking – Required revisions to PC's bank mandate; internet banking – PC still waiting for the appropriate and free dual authorisation internet banking system to be available from NatWest.

15. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 7.00pm