

COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 6th MARCH 2024

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) – No matters raised.

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. To note attendance and receive apologies for absence

In attendance were Cllrs Noel Talbot (NT), who chaired the meeting, Garren Edwards (GE) and Lynne Richardson (LR), District Cllr Keith Vernon (KV) and Clerk Alison James. Apologies received from Cllr Nigel Parry (NP) and County Cllr Richard Cox (RC). 1 member of the public observed part of the meeting.

2. To receive declarations of interest - None

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

4. Chairman’s Announcements – None.

5. Payments

a) To confirm details of payment agreed at February meeting:

i) 1992 Alan Swaysland – Deposit for barn dance caller & music, parish event, Sat 22 June 2024 £125.00

b) To approve the following payments:

i) 1993 TGM – Gritting of roads not covered by SCC in January – Main Colton streets, 4 visits (360.00), Brook bridge, 4 visits (60.00); Stockwell Heath, 4 visits (60.00); plus VAT (96.00) £576.00

ii) 1994 Colton Village Hall – Room hire for Jan, Feb and March meetings £45.00

iii) 1995 Hinson Parry – Renewal of grazing licence (25.00) plus VAT (5.00) £30.00

iv) 1996 Alison James – Clerk’s salary, March (356.93) Home working expenses, 4 weeks, 10 Feb – 8 Mar (16.00); Reimbursement for bank payment to magazine delivery girl on 28 Feb for March delivery (20.00); Reimbursement for set of XL printer cartridges (57.31) plus VAT (11.46) £461.70

v) 1997 HMRC – Payroll taxes, Jan – Mar £295.19

vi) 1998 Petty cash top up £50.00

(Total of new payments for approval at item 5 b) is £1,457.89)

All payments above approved and all cheques for 5 b) signed at end of meeting.

6. Planning Matters

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

Question raised whether work was proceeding at 1 property before grant of planning permission. Cllrs need to be alert. **Clerk** to check on LDC website.

b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority – None notified.

7. Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

a) To report on new issues or progress and agree any action required:

- i) Flooding and highways maintenance including Petition re Flooding & Maintaining Road Access and particular floods at Bellamour Lane Bridge and Hollow Lane – Highways have cleared Hollow Lane but not sure if it is a longer-term fix and pressure needs to be kept on Richard Cox and Highways for a resolution to maintain access during flooding events. GE had a disappointing response from Highways to his list of drainage issues reported. The school sent a letter to RC raising the number of times it had needed to close early to ensure children could get home. The idea of an emergency contact list of people with larger vehicles to assist in ferrying children over bridge had been raised with the school and GE would put something on Facebook. Drain opposite school near bridge is still blocked with large puddle which becomes more dangerous when it freezes. Despite repeated reporting, nothing has been done.
- ii) State of Newlands Lane – Work is still needed on the road surface all along the lane as previous work was unsatisfactory. Also the recent floods caused torrents of water and a bit of a landslide near the end of Narrow Lane.
- iii) Parking issues in the village – PCSOs had said they were unavailable to attend this or April's PC meeting but would carry out high visibility checks on parking and potentially leave a note on vehicles parked poorly. **Clerk** to submit a brief note for magazine.
- iv) State of Narrow Lane (at end of Heathway) – RC was to ask Highways if PC contractor would be allowed to clear debris from middle of road. **Clerk** had not yet followed this up due to higher priority of recent flooding issues but would raise with RC again.
- v) Issue of speeding in the village raised by parishioners, suggested set up of Community Speed Watch and other potential measures to reduce speeding; possible approach to Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership – NP was waiting to hear back from SCC/Eon about cost of putting speed monitors on lampposts.
- vi) Works to bench near the phone box and noticeboard near village hall – Clerk had instructed handyman, who hoped to do the work in late March or early April, subject to drier conditions. Bench near Closed Burial Ground had been mended to some degree by a parishioner so would no longer be included in handyman's jobs.
- vii) Improving the appearance of the parish and jobs for parish handyperson – Possible litter picking event – Arranged for Saturday 27th April, 9am-12noon. **Clerk** to contact LDC again for litter picking equipment and put advert in magazine. **GE** to ask Greyhound if they would provide refreshments at PC expense afterwards.
- viii) Parking arrangements in the vicinity of the school at start and finish times – Still considered to be a safety issue, although greater use may be being made of the roads by the church, so leave on agenda. **GE** to see if 'No parking except for funerals' sign can be cut off.

8. To discuss progress on arrangements for parish events on 21-23 June 2024

A further meeting was held recently and one arranged for following week, to which WI are sending a representative. Various events set up and NP had put a poster on Facebook. Parishioner had contacted the school PTA looking for interest and volunteers for e.g. supervising a bouncy castle. **GE** to contact school head to hopefully get them involved.

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

Follow up on draft Engagement Plan circulated by Noel Talbot – A separate meeting is needed and it was suggested that the 3 councillors attending the next parish events meeting could discuss beforehand (**NT/GE/NP**).

10. Correspondence

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

- a) TGM – Annual insurance certificates for PC's appointed grounds maintenance contractors for 2024 season (Email)
- b) SCC – Update on the work of the HS2 team at SCC (Email, circ. to cllrs)
- c) Cannock Chase District Council – Consultation on Cannock Chase Local Plan, closing 18th March (email)
- d) LDC – Review of Public Space Protection Orders regarding dog fouling - forwarded to VHMC but it has been pointed out that play area is not public open space nor is it fenced off, as would be required (Email)
- e) SPCA – Opportunity for parish councils to get free portrait photo of the King (Email) – **Clerk** to check details and dimensions and ask VHMC if interested.
- f) SPCA – Weekly bulletins (Emails, mainly circulated to cllrs)

11. Committees

To note any update from Burial Ground Committee - **Clerk** to ask handyman to look at latch on entrance gate, as not working properly. **Clerk** to also ask TGM if moss on path should be sprayed again.

12. Finance and audit

- a) To receive latest financial report of receipts and payments compared to budget for 2023/24 to date – The original budget allowed for an overspend, to be taken from reserves. The report showed an overspend to date but not quite as large as planned. Income had been higher than budgeted, mainly due to bank interest, and further income would be included when later bank statements received.
- b) To agree any earmarking of funds at year end – PC agreed that the 2 separate earmarked reserves relating to the play area should now be combined. After discussion, PC agreed that the earmarked reserve for election expenses should be retained. **Clerk** to update spreadsheet.
- c) To sign grazing licence for PC land off Heathway – Hinson Parry had finally produced an updated licence and licensee had sent his signed copy. NT, as chair of this meeting, signed that too and **Clerk** would send copy back to licensee so all set up for rest of licence year.
- d) To hear any update on banking arrangements – Clerk had submitted 2 applications online for her change of address and removal of former signatory from mandate. NT and GE confirmed they had authorised by uploading digital signatures so Clerk was awaiting confirmation from bank.

13. Parish Council matters

- a) To hear progress on arranging a tree inspection report – **Clerk** chasing up a quote from the company which carried out the previous inspection.

A suggestion had been made of having a measuring stick by the ford to indicate flood depth, possibly with a camera on top. However, PC was concerned it could be held liable for incorrect decisions so idea would not be pursued.

14. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 3rd April at 7.30pm (approximately) (following Burial Ground Committee meeting starting at 7pm) – NP had already given apologies for April & May meetings.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm