

COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 3rd JULY 2024

AT 7.00 PM AT COLTON VILLAGE HALL (MAIN ROOM)

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

Parishioner raised the overgrown condition of the footpath alongside the Colton Rd from Rugeley Lodge to Bellamour Corner. Also, the overgrown grass on the verge opposite Bellamour Corner, which removes visibility for drivers wanting to turn and had recently resulted in a crash. Parishioner had reported but **Clerk** to also report to Highways.

Another parishioner raised the overgrown verge and bank opposite the school preventing visibility along Bellamour Way for those coming out from the church and open burial ground. It was not clear why that verge hadn't been cut when others were cut by LDC and TGM for the Festival. **Clerk** to contact LDC to check which areas they are contracted by SCC to cut.

Richard Cox commented that No Mow May makes it difficult for the relevant teams to catch up on grass cutting and the equipment is not designed to deal with such long grass. He personally does not want the No Mow May, whilst appreciating the ecology and biodiversity arguments.

Clerk raised questions received from another parishioner about when works would be scheduled again for Newlands Lane, where there are large potholes and a deep channel at the side of the road towards Stockwell Heath. Richard Cox said he was happy to receive such emails direct as it was an SCC responsibility and nothing the PC could action. **Clerk** to forward email (anonymised) to him. Newlands Lane is on his list of priorities but it is 2.5 miles long and needs Roadmaster to blitz the whole road. SCC have received additional funding and are desperately trying to get as much work done over the summer to improve the state of the roads before the winter. But filling potholes is only a temporary solution and it would need a massive investment (SCC estimate £8 billion) to get all the county's roads up to scratch, which is not going to happen.

Parishioner asked about the advertised road closures, particularly on Station Road which is now showing as 12-21 July. Richard Cox said it was a 9-day window for the resurfacing works but would probably only require 2 days actual closure, depending on the weather. Clerk asked why she had not received a road closure notice for that. Richard Cox said the notices are the legal process which takes a long time and Highways are trying to push through as many works as they can.

(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), Nigel Parry (NP) and Lynne Richardson (LR), County Councillor Richard Cox (RC), District Councillor Keith Vernon (KV) and Clerk Alison James. NT was proposed by LR and seconded by NP to be Chair for the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Garren Edwards (GE). 2 members of the public observed.

2. To receive declarations of interest NT – items 7 b) ii) and v); NP – item 7 b) viii)

3. To approve minutes of meeting held on 5th June - Minutes approved and signed.

4. To co-opt new councillor Richard Monbiot

Unfortunately, an urgent matter had arisen that afternoon so Richard Monbiot was unable to attend. Clerk was unsure if it was possible to co-opt in his absence and

had not had time to check. She thought it might have been possible had the signed Declaration of Acceptance already been received. It was agreed that the co-option should be deferred to the next meeting.

5. To receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office – see previous item.

6. Chairman’s Announcements – None.

7. Payments

- a) To note the following payments confirmed at June meeting:
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|------|------|--|---------|
| i) | 2014 | Colton Village Hall – Room hire for April to June meetings including Parish Assembly | £60.00 |
| ii) | 2015 | Colton Burial Ground Administrative Committee - Interim funds for 2024/25 (confirmed at prior BGC meeting) | £500.00 |
| iii) | 2016 | S Izon – Festival Bake Off competition prizes | £40.20 |
- b) To approve the following payments:
- | | | | |
|-------|------|---|---------|
| i) | 2017 | TGM – Grass cutting, April and/or May – Village Hall, 2 cuts (191.70); Closed Burial Ground, 2 cuts (94.56), Stockwell Heath, 1 cut (31.52) plus VAT (63.55) | £381.33 |
| ii) | 2018 | Cllr N Talbot – Megaphone for Festival events (49.99 incl. VAT); Balance for Festival face painter (170.00); Festival bouncy castle hire (150.00) | £369.99 |
| iii) | 2019 | Alison James – Clerk’s salary, July (356.93) Home working expenses, 4 weeks, 4 May – 8 June – 5 July (16.00); Reimbursement for bank payment to magazine delivery girl made on 27 June for July delivery (20.00); Reimbursement for black XL cartridge (23.90); BGC Clerk salary for 1 Apr – 30 Jun (137.50) less tax (27.50) | £526.83 |
| iv) | 2020 | Petty cash top up | £50.00 |
| v) | 2021 | Cllr N Talbot – Cancel and re-issue cheque 2013 (misaid) for printer cartridge for Festival printing | £22.70 |
| vi) | 2022 | Rob Keyzor Tree Surgeons – Tree inspection and report (475.00) plus VAT (95.00) | £570.00 |
| vii) | 2023 | Mr G Hunt – Reimbursement for arrangement of insurance for Festival beacon etc. | £233.98 |
| viii) | | Petty cash – Cllr N Parry - Megaphone batteries | £14.00 |

(Total of new payments (excluding re-issued cheque and petty cash top up) for approval at b) is £2,096.13).

An additional claim for Festival expenses had been received from GE and would be paid from petty cash and recorded on the next agenda.

Clerk said she had forgotten to include reference to payments due in August, such as for TGM and her salary, on this agenda. They would need to be approved by email and ratified at the September meeting.

8. Planning Matters

- a) To note any applications received and make observations to the Planning Authority: None notified by time of issue of agenda

- b) To report on any recent decisions of the Planning Authority: None notified by time of issue of agenda, so nothing to report.

9. 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 – There had not been any further action on this. NT summarised that Colton requires Hollow Lane to be maintained as the normal route out of the village when there is flooding. Nothing can realistically be done about flooding by the brook bridge but Hollow Lane did not use to flood so something could be done. RC said the petition is a strategic issue. He added that Mary Lee had unfortunately now retired but had asked for photos of the flooding on Hollow Lane. **NP** to send him some photos from the Facebook Residents site at the time.
 - ii) SCC flood resilience projects – **Clerk** to contact LDC to see if there was any follow up to the Colton response sent by GE.
 - iii) Issue of speeding in the village raised by parishioners - Proposed purchase and installation of speed detection device – **NP** said he was not sure when the required product would be available and would report further in September or October.
 - iv) Improving the appearance of the parish and any jobs for parish handyperson – It was proposed that as a short term solution **Clerk** should ask contractor for 2 hrs of strimming work to cut the verges opposite the school and at Bellamour Corner, as raised in Public Participation and to remove weeds on right hand side of High Street. NT was looking into getting weedkiller treatment done again.
 - v) Parking issues in the village – PCSOs said they had carried out patrols a few months ago and had not found any evidence of illegal parking, though it was noted that their patrols were probably not done at the time of the main problem which is overnight. PC concluded that not much more can be done now, though, as a positive, school parents were now parking more sensibly by the church.
 - vi) Damage to verges and banks from tractors etc. – Comments had been received from a parishioner about this, which tied in with comments during Public Participation about the condition of Newlands Lane and also top of High St. Vehicles and trailers are all getting larger and not suited to the local road network but not much can be done without noting and following up with specific vehicles or owners.
 - vii) Forthcoming road closures including Station Road and A51 – covered under Public Participation.

10. To discuss feedback on the Colton Summer Festival on 21-23 June

Wash up meeting to be held the following week. There had been one or two hitches but generally the weekend had gone very well and there had been positive feedback. RC said the PC's application for £400 from his part of SCC's Community Fund had been approved so PC should get formal notification soon and he was thanked for his support. NP asked if similar funding might be forthcoming next year and RC said it was uncertain, as there will be county council elections next year. **Clerk** to send thank yous to PLT and Alice Hadridge for their help and support. **Clerk** had compiled a provisional finance sheet but would complete and then send to PLT for information.

11. 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 – **Clerk** to leave on agenda for next meeting by which time NT hoped he could get additional input.

12. Correspondence

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

- a) SCC Highways – Road closure notices for June on Moor Lane and Hollow Lane (Emails, circulated to cllrs but received too late for magazine)
- b) SPCA – SCC seeking input from parish councils for their Local Transport Plan (Email, circulated to councillors) – There was discussion about transport needs for the parish with the suggestion of having a daily bus, included as part of a franchise and not necessarily profit making in itself. It had also previously been suggested that a footpath & cycle route from the village to the station should be created. RC pointed out that the no. 63 bus route from Uttoxeter to Cannock via Abbots Bromley had recently been reinstated and perhaps one of the existing local services could be re-routed to include Colton.
- c) LDC – Request for any updates to services and facilities available in Colton parish for their Settlement Sustainability Study (Email; Clerk sent reply)
- d) SPCA – Various correspondence (Emails, mainly circulated to cllrs)

13. Committees

To note any update from Burial Ground Committee – One cheque for grass cutting needed to be signed at the end of the meeting. NT pointed out that the area behind the gate by the shed is very overgrown and has become a bit of a dumping ground. **Clerk** to seek a quote for getting it tidied up.

14. Finance and audit

- a) 2023/24 accounts - To note the submission of the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditors on 15th June – Noted that it was submitted on time.
- b) 2024/25 accounts - To note the acceptance of appointment as internal auditor from Kim Squires – Noted.
- c) To hear any update on banking arrangements – Clerk had obtained a phone number for the business team and **NT** would take up with them the lack of a suitable and affordable internet banking system.
- d) To note that Clerk will review the new model financial regulations from NALC over the summer and circulate a draft tailored version for Colton for consideration by the next meeting – The new regulations are a little clearer than the previous version so **Clerk** will use them but incorporate Colton's specific requirements.

15. Parish Council matters

- a) To receive the tree inspection report and agree any follow up action required – As there was no urgent action recommended, it was agreed that **Councillors** and **Clerk** should discuss if any further action should be taken at the next meeting. Inspector's comments on a silver birch near the Open Burial Ground to be sent to the PCC (**Clerk**).
- b) To discuss future arrangements for PC mobile – Clerk had recently received a message from the network provider saying that the phone would soon be disconnected due to lack of use. After contacting them and using the phone, the disconnection had been suspended. However, the phone is very old and basic. Options for replacement to be investigated and further discussed in September (**Clerk and Councillors**).

16. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 4th September (No meeting in August)

Meeting closed at 8.10pm