

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Colmworth Parish Council on Wednesday 4th October 2017 at 7.30pm in the Roman Room of the Village Hall at Colmworth.

Present: Cllr. E. Pegler (Chairman), Cllr. L. Knight (Vice Chairman), Cllr. T. Frew, Cllr. B. Brightman, L. Crawford (Clerk) and two members of the public.

1. Apologies. Cllr. P. Ball.

2. Declarations of Interest and Confirmation of Changes to Registers of Interest.

None.

3. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13th September.

Having been previously circulated the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Pegler and seconded by Cllr. Knight.

4. Public Open Forum

A parishioner reported concerns about mud on the road in Honeydon Road caused by the construction works at Kitium House and that the tractors splash the stones and mud back onto the road so it needs daily or weekly clearing. The parishioner reported seeing cyclists and motorcyclists skidding on the mud and stones. Cllr Knight agreed to write to Bedford Borough Council's Highways Department.

A parishioner also reported concerns about the ditch 50 feet from Bernlee on Honeydon Road. The Borough Council opened up the ditch to deal with some tree roots which were encroaching but they did not fill it up again and it is now full of water and there is a strong smell of petrol or diesel which suggests something is leaking into the drain / ditch. The Clerk will report this.

A parishioner suggested that round robin flyers would be a better method of informing parishioners about significant changes eg. the proposed removal of the street lights than an article in the Chronicle. Cllr. Pegler explained that the Chronicle is posted to every household and, therefore, the Parish Council did not see the need to post flyers as well.

A parishioner reminded the Council that he had been critical of the budget increases last year and did not think that the Council would actually spend any more than in previous years in 2017/18. The Clerk agreed that there had been some savings eg on staff costs and insurance but that much of these had already been allocated to other projects eg. the purchase of new dog bins for the Country Park so she anticipated the payments being similar to the budget.

5. Councillor vacancies (following the resignation of David Michell in August and Russell Jones in September).

Russell Jones resigned following the September meeting. There are now two vacancies on the Parish Council and these have been advertised but no one has come forward yet.

6. Discuss whether to purchase a "Silent Soldier" to commemorate the fallen from WW1. Cost is £250.



Cllr Pegler proposed that parishioners be invited to donate to a Silent Soldier rather than using public funds. This was seconded by Cllr Brightman and Councillors were unanimously in favour. Three Councillors and a member of the public agreed to donate and the Clerk will invite further donations on the Trumpet and Facebook. Several locations were proposed: the Country Park, the small triangle at the entrance to Honeydon Road and by the map outside the Village Hall. The Clerk agreed to talk to the Royal British Legion about the best way to fund the soldier for gift aid and to talk to Highways about where to locate the soldier.

7. Planning applications

None received.

8. Amend signatories to the Parish Council accounts following the resignation of Cllr Jones.

Cllrs. Knight, Brightman and Frew were added to the accounts and Cllr Jones was removed. Cllr. Knight will become an online signatory. Mandate change forms were signed by Cllr Ball prior to the meeting and Cllr. Pegler at the meeting.

9. Amend administrators for the Clerk's NEST pension fund

Cllr Knight proposed that the Clerk be added as a Schedule Delegate so that she can set up and change the contribution schedule but not make contributions on behalf of the employer. Cllr Pegler seconded. Councillors were unanimously in favour.

10. Approve the budget for 2018/19.

The following points were agreed under this agenda item:

- a 2% increase in the precept would be acceptable and below the rate of inflation
- the greatest unknown is the cost of cutting the grass in the Country Park. Mark Ibbetts has offered to cut it for free if ragwort can be controlled and he has quoted per bale and per cut if he cannot sell the hay. Our estimate if the hay cannot be sold is around £300 so this was used for budgeting purposes.
- All the residents of Manor Barns have kindly offered not to charge for electricity used for the Christmas lights on the Triangle this year (but £15 remained in the budget as we cannot guarantee this for future years).
- Cllr Knight proposed that the Council revisit the amount of money given to the Church for churchyard maintenance (previously £200) if money is saved on grass cutting in the Country Park. Cllr Pegler proposed to put £300 in the budget to be reviewed later in the year.

The budget was proposed by Cllr. Knight and seconded by Cllr. Pegler. Councillors voted unanimously in favour of the budget which was adopted and is shown on p3-6 of these minutes.

11. Payments:

- Morgan-Pell Livestock (cutting the grass in the Country Park) £600
- L. Crawford (salary for October) £336.53.
- J. Douglas (fuel for cutting the paths in the Country Park) £200
- W.T Saunders (cutting the playing field) £134.40
- The above payments were proposed by Cllr Knight, seconded by Cllr Pegler and they signed them off in the list of approved payments in the invoice folder.
- In addition, Cllr. Knight proposed that the Clerk's salary be paid by direct debit and Cllr. Pegler seconded the motion. Cllrs were unanimously in favour and the motion was passed.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 1st November 2017

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

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Budget 2018-2019								
	Actual Year to 31st Mch 17 £		Budget Year to 31st Mch 18 £		Forecast Year to 31st Mch 18 £		Budget to 31st Mch 2019	Comment
REGULAR RECEIPTS								
	Brk'dn	Total	Brk'dn	Total	Brk'dn	Total		
Precept		8,568.00		13,406.00		13,406.00	13,670.00	Increase of 2.0%
Council Tax Support Grant		41.00		21.00		21.00	0.00	Beds Borough Council are phasing this out
Total Regular Receipts		8,609.00		13,427.00		13,427.00	13,670.00	Should be equal to regular payments
OTHER RECEIPTS								
Chronicle advertising		1,882.00		1,720.00		1,720.00	1,220.00	Equal to costs. Lowest estimate is zero & highest = £1720
Interest		0.00		0.00				
Gardening Club		40.00		0.00		496.52	0.00	Proceeds of Open Gardens
Country Park Reserve		50.00				205.00	0.00	Donated in memory of J. Hutchings
Ward Fund		791.70		0.00		900.21	0.00	Scouts and projector in 2015/16, bark for play area in 2016/17. £900 for church noticeboard 2017/18.
Transparency Code Grant				393.84		851.40	0.00	Grant was available for 2017/18 as well (£457.56 for 2017/18 not in budget). None in 2018/19
Other		0.00		0.00		0.00		
Donations / sponsorship		0.00		0.00		0.00		
Donations for village gates		1,469.00		1,250.00		1,250.00	0.00	
Neigh'd Plan		0.00		0.00		0.00	0.00	No grants received since 2015/16. Best not to budget for grants unless we are certain of them.
Fayre Proceeds		0.00		0.00		0.00	0.00	No fayre held in 2016 or 2017. Assume none 2018
Total Other Receipts excl VAT		4,232.70		3,363.84		5,423.13	1,220.00	
Total Receipts excl VAT		12,841.70		16,790.84		18,850.13	14,890.00	

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REGULAR PAYMENTS							
Clerk's Salary & Pension	4,030.61		4,266.41		4,107.58		4,719.78 In 2017/18 3 hours per month were met from Transparency Code grant. In 2018/19 7 hours per week will all be met from precept), 2% increase in pay but no increase on the salary scale (ie remaining at SP23).
Clerk's employment expenses (staff cost)	331.20		342.00		283.50		300.00 2017/18 £18 HWA*, 10.50 travel = £28.50 per month. Travel less than budget. Assume £7 travel per month in 2018/19
Clerk's other expenses	116.35		144.00		23.67		48.00 Budget for £2 postage and £2 other sundries = £4 per month. Printing & most stationary now under admin as we buy direct to reclaim VAT
PAYE	297.00		0.00		80.60		0.00 No PAYE expected 2018/19
Total of Clerk's regular employm't costs & expenses		4,775.16		4,752.41		4,495.35	5,067.78
Councillors expenses		0.00		50.00		50.00	50.00 Travel to meetings, printing etc.
Loan repaym't		1,355.90		1,355.90		1,355.90	1,355.90
Training		34.00		120.00		120.00	425.00 5 courses x £30 (2 x LC, 3 x Cllrs) + £275 for Clerk's Core Skills course
Grass & Hedge Cutting (playing field)		686.00		896.00		796.00	972.32 £560 + £58 for extra public liability insurance for cutting, £236 for moss & weed control, £100 for hedge cutting (£200 on alternate years). We will cut the hedge using £100 regular payments and £100 from the hedge cutting reserve in 2018/19. Plus 2% increase from 2017/18
Insur'ce		906.00		1,015.00		576.36	577.00 Fixed price for three years
Audit costs		310.00		220.00		180.00	100.00 2016/17 additional audit costs due to issues with 2015/16 accounts. In 2017/18 we budgeted £120 for BDO external audit, £100 for 2 internal audits. Saved £40 because BDO £100 and Kim £30 in April not £50 as agreed. No external audit costs in 2018/19 £50 each of two internal audits
Power (Street lights & Triangle lights)		96.00		300.00		280.00	303.00 Budget: Street lights £288 and triangle lights £15 (estimate assuming we pay 11% of the standing charge ie pro rata our elec use).

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	Actual Year to 31st Mch 17 £	Budget Year to 31st Mch 18 £				Comment
REGULAR PAYMENTS CONT.						
General Maint'ce, Inspection & Repairs	250.00	305.00		305.00	300.00	2016/17 £250 tree inspections. 2017/18 Street light maintenance £105, £200 other eg noticeboards, dog bins, repairs to street lights, gates, vehicle activated signs + similar for 2018/19
Annual Play Area Insp'ion	77.00	77.00		77.00	77.00	Play Safety - confirmed no increases in 2018
Playing field / play area m'nance & consumables	165.00	400.00		400.00	400.00	Repairs and maintenance to play area £200, annual bark top up £200.
Country Park	739.00	841.00		841.00	935.00	£500 cutting meadow (thistles and ragwort), £141 other eg. wood preservers, dog bins, bags etc.. 2018/19 £150 for sundries, £200 for fuel to cut paths, £120 for set of mower blades, £300 for cutting meadows but it could be zero if we are able to control ragwort + £165 for other costs.
Traffic calming / street light replacement		1,000.00			1,000.00	Regular savings for a future project. Not spent but added to earmarked reserves as planned.
Regular tree work		150.00		150.00	150.00	Felling dead trees / making branches safe.
Subs	126.00	203.00		181.00	187.00	Budget: BATPC £93, CPRE £38, SLCC £56 (shared between 2 Councils)
Admin	108.00	207.00		363.00	363.00	Budget: £80 payroll, £38 info commissioner, £175 print cartridges, £20 other stationary, £50 other. Increased as printing and stationary moved from Clerk's expenses to admin
N'hd Plan costs excluding grant funded costs	64.00	226.00		226.00	217.00	3 x 3 hr meetings in main hall at £7 each + 2 at weekend £9 each + £100 admin = £217.
Website costs	63.00	22.79		9.52	0.00	Colmworth.org reduced to holding page in Sept 2016 and holding page stopped Oct 2017.
Handyman for play area insp'tion and general m'tnace	124.00	615.00		470.00	405.00	Assumes 50 hours at £8 per hour plus a 2% increase in Sep 2018
Vllg Hall Hire	65.00	111.00		156.00	155.00	6 meetings x 3 hrs at £5 per hour + 3 extra meetings x 2 hours at £5 per hour (Roman Room)+ 1 x 2 hr meeting in main hall + Parish Meeting x 3 hrs in main hall at £7 per hour = £155
Churchyard maintenance	200.00	200.00		200.00	300.00	£200 with option to increase to £300
Literature & info	0.00	60.00		60.00	30.00	eg manuals and reference materials for Clerk
Contingency	0.00	300.00		300.00	300.00	
Total Regular payments	10,144.06	13,427.10		11,592.13	13,670.00	

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OTHER PAYMENTS								
Chronicle		1,193.00		1,206.00		1,206.00	1,220.00	Printing 4 issues at £275 each, £80 software, £40 print cartridges and postage
Additional hours for the Clerk		438.00		474.00		456.40	0.00	Met from Transparency Code grant £394 + £80 from reserves in 2017/18. In 2018/19 all of the clerk's 7 hours per week will be paid out of precept
Holiday backpay for D. Robins		103.00					0.00	
Fayre Donations		0.00		0.00			0.00	
Fayre expenses		0.00		0.00			0.00	
Ward fund donations		0.00				900.21	0.00	Bark purchased in 2016 - not donated, Church noticeboard 2017.
Assets Purchased (excl GC & CP reserves)		0.00		2,700.00		2,700.00	0.00	2015/16 triangle lights & projector (ward fund), 2017/18 village gates
Country Park (spending from reserves)						201.27	0.00	Hutchings bench, plaque & owl box. Covered by donation.
Gardening Club (Triangle m'nance, bulb planting etc)		16.63		0.00		137.95	0.00	Covered by G. Club funds
Gardening Club (assets purchased)						133.33	0.00	Covered by G. Club funds
H'ways & street light reserve (bulbs for village gates)						50.00	0.00	
Neighbourhood Plan (grant funded expenses)		3,774.00		0.00		0.00	0.00	2016/17 £3774 grant repaid. No grants in 2017
Picking up grass (playing field) 2017 only				360.00		360.00	0.00	Once moss under control should mulch in
Bark for play area (Ward Fund)		766.00					0.00	Large top up needed 2016/17. £200 annual top up of bark in playing field regular payments in future
Exceptional tree work (C'try Park & Playing F'ld)		0.00		550.00		500.00	0.00	
Legal fees (renewing lease on playing f'ld)		460.00					0.00	
Extra churchyard maintenance (extra payment due to no payment in 2015/16)				100.00		100.00	0.00	
Total Other Payments		6,750.63		5,390.00		6,745.16	1,220.00	Other payments are met by other receipts eg GC or CP funds, Chronicle advertising, Transparency grant
TOTAL PAYMENTS EXCL VAT		16,894.69		18,817.10		18,337.29	14,890.00	VAT is reclaimed and therefore excluded from budget
REGULAR SURPLUS / DEFICIT		-1,535.06		-0.10		1,834.87	0.00	
OTHER SURPLUS / DEFICIT		-2,517.93		-2,026.16		-1,322.03	0.00	
TOTAL SURPLUS / DEFICIT		-4,052.99		-2,026.26		512.84	0.00	

*HWA = Home Working Allowance

Blue text denotes info specific to 2017/18 and red text denotes info specific to 2018/19

In 2017/18 the deficit is predicted to be lower than we budgeted. We still need to use approx. £2000 of our reserve funds for other expenditure but we have received additional earmarked reserve funds (£458 received trans code grant + £209 unspent GC receipts)

In summary in 2018/19 we are planning to increase the precept by 2.0% (approximately the level of inflation) and the precept will match our regular spending. There are some savings on insurance but the Clerk's additional 3 hours per month will be met from the precept this year whereas last year they were met from other receipts and reserves. The uncertainties are the cost of cutting the grass in the meadows (could be £300 or zero depending on whether the hay is saleable) and the receipts and payments from the Chronicle.