

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes

of an Extraordinary Meeting of Colmworth Parish Council held on Thursday 19th July 2018 at 7.30pm in the Main Hall of the Village Hall at Colmworth.

Present:

Cllr. E. Pegler (Chair), Cllr. L. Knight (Vice Chair), Cllr. P. Ball, Cllr. T. Frew, Cllr. G. Palmer and L. Crawford (Clerk)
Four members of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllr. B. Brightman

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

None

3. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 5th July 2018

Having been previously circulated these were approved as an accurate record of the meeting with one amendment to item 7 Highways and Rights of Way to include the point that the Parish Council will contact Bidwells and classify the ownership of Footpath 10. Proposed by Cllr. L. Knight and seconded by Cllr. P. Ball.

4. Public Open Forum

Cllr. E. Pegler explained that the Parish Council had wanted to find a way to give their support to the application whilst addressing the issues of concern to residents. She highlighted the issues regarding HGV's on Wilden Road and explained that the Parish Council had considered a designation of "Unsuitable for HGV's" on this road. Andrew Prigmore's (Bedford Borough Council Highways Department) initial response stated that an "Unsuitable for HGV" designation would be difficult to enforce. Cllr. E. Pegler explained that in the past she had met Simon Deards of Bedford Borough Council who had advised that Wilden Road was unsuitable for HGV's and he had recommended that it be designated as such. He had said that the designation would discourage HGV's using the road because it could invalidate their insurance in the event of an accident. Companies would also discipline drivers if they were using unsuitable roads. He had offered to approach freight companies if a community lorry watch scheme identified lorries which were using unsuitable roads.

Cllr. T. Frew queried how those on the lorry watch scheme would know which vehicles were accessing the village and which were through vehicles.

Cllr. L. Knight explained that although access would not be prevented by the designation it would discourage through traffic and encourage vehicles to use other access routes such as the B660 and New Road.

Cllr. E. Pegler suggested that we should not stop introducing weight restrictions just because the police would find it difficult to enforce them.

Cllr. E. Pegler emphasised that she was keen to challenge the pre-application advice from Stephen Eccles of Highways: <http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/PlanningBrowse.aspx?id=bkxD%2b9UHzJH5FLCUd8cXgw%3d%3d> which stated that "The implementation of the development would result in an increase of HGV movements on the local highway network. The standard of the nearby roads is such that it should not result in a significant negative impact". She suggested that the Parish Council strongly contest this statement. She pointed out that Mill Road, and Honeydon Road are already designated unsuitable for HGV traffic and that Wilden Road is also unsuitable. She reminded those present that there have been significant problems with HGV traffic on Wilden Road in the past and the Parish Council have already provided a log of incidents on the road to the Highways Department. Many of these incidents involved HGV's. In order to negotiate the sharp bends on the road lorries have to move into the middle of the road and they cannot pass other vehicles because the road is too narrow. Lorries have collided with cars, pushed cars and pedestrians off the road, and caused deep ruts in the edges which have in turn caused nasty accidents.

She suggested that, although the B8 open storage designation meant that the applicants could lease to another large HGV distributor at any time this was not a reason to give permission to this development.

Cllr. E. Pegler read a letter from a resident of Wilden Road.

"I have strong feelings about Highway Safety along Wilden road. I was disturbed, yet again, by the latest statement from Highways which I read this morning. I do not accept what they say about the suitability of Wilden Road for HGV/articulated traffic. If proof is needed, then Highways just need to come and examine the condition of the granite sets on the bend outside Bowie's Cottage & Wheatsheaf Cottages. The granite sets

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were re-concreted in place in January 2018 – they are now back to the state they were in prior to the work. If this damage is not being caused by large vehicles colliding with the sets on a regular basis then I would like to know what is causing the problem.

Cristopher & I will appreciate any support the Parish Councillors are prepared to provide in liaising with Highways on this matter, especially if the proposed plan goes ahead for the land north of Tythe Farm. I hope I have made it clear that I have no objection to the enterprise itself; it is purely a matter of the suitability of local roads for any additional HGV traffic caused by the development. Whilst I accept & applaud the current owners assertion that there is no intention to encourage articulated vehicles onto the site, one can never say never. Who knows what purpose the facility might be put to if the ownership of the land changed?"

Cllr. L. Knight explained that she had been in discussion with Andrew Prigmore who had explained that a designation of "Unsuitable for HGV's" would cost £2500 to install the signs. Wilden Road could be added to the list but there were limited funds available and this road would not be top priority. However, he had explained that if the Parish Council were able to fund the scheme it would be more likely that the Borough Council could deliver this. She reported that there was £3400 in the Parish Council's traffic calming / street light replacement earmarked reserve which could be used to support the scheme. Councillors agreed that some residents of the parish might want to donate to the scheme and Cllr. E. Pegler offered to donate.

Cllr. E. Pegler suggested that the Parish Council consider how much (if any) they would like to contribute towards the scheme and invite residents to make up the shortfall. She confirmed that she personally would be happy to contribute.

Cllr. T. Frew suggested that Cllr. L. Knight should ask the Highways Department to contribute towards the scheme. Cllr. L. Knight believed that they were unlikely to contribute but would ask.

A resident suggested that if Wilden Road was dangerous the Borough Council should install signage and the Parish Council and parishioners should not have to pay for it. Cllr. L. Knight explained that the Borough Council have very little money available for such a scheme and we would be low priority.

Cllr. L. Knight reported that she had asked Bedford Borough Council highways department for further evidence of the data used to arrive at their assessments of increased traffic and their statement that the local roads were suitable for HGV's. They had done a TRICS assessment which is a course assessment of the potential volume and distribution of traffic. She had also found that "Unsuitable for HGV's" signs could be installed where there were difficult road conditions eg. it was narrow or there were sharp bends and this is clearly the case in Wilden Road. She had met with two police officers in the village last week and they had confirmed that they did not believe Wilden Road was suitable for HGV's. They had agreed to install data recorders to assess volume, type and speed of vehicles in September. This will provide a helpful baseline figure before any potential development occurs,

Another resident suggested that there had been too much focus on Wilden Road and that he was concerned about the additional traffic using the junction of Church Road and School Lane which has a nursery and a children's playground. He wanted to know how much additional traffic there would be. Cllr. L. Knight explained that the TRICS assessment had estimated that there would be 10 additional traffic movements per day vs the B8 Open Storage which is permitted on the site at present.

Cllr. P. Ball expressed concern about the fact that the internal walls of the new unit were removeable. Heather Seabrook explained that this was correct but that it was their intention to let the new building as smaller units rather than as one big unit.

Cllr. P. Ball asked how we could ensure that there was safe access to the Playing Field. The only official access to the playing field is via the footpath which goes up School Lane. The emergency access via the Village Hall car park is provided as a goodwill arrangement only.

A resident suggested that the Parish Council request a 20mph zone outside the nursery school. Cllr. L. Knight suggested that this be included on the agenda for the September meeting and that the data gathered from the data recorders be used to communicate with parents at the nursery school in their newsletter and remind them about speeding.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for their support regarding the footpath near Kitium House and for their support in applying for the Ward Fund for the Chronicle.

5. Planning

- Consider proposal from Urban Vision for support with Colmworth's Neighbourhood Plan £5500 plus expenses (to be funded by grant applications) to assist with the plan process and policy development. It was agreed that the Parish Council should not adopt Urban Vision's proposal at this stage. Cllr. G. Palmer is in discussions with Dave Chetwyn of Urban Vision regarding obtaining some advice on an hourly rate possibly by Skype.
- Consider how to respond to the planning application at Tythe Farm:

Application number	Description	Location
18/01034/MAF	Erection of a building for Use Classes B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) commercial uses, parking area and associated works.	Land north of Tythe Farm, School Lane, Colmworth

Cllr. E. Pegler proposed that Colmworth Parish Council support this planning application subject to the following conditions:

- Wilden Road being designated "Unsuitable for HGV traffic" with signs installed to this effect. It was agreed that the Clerk should challenge the pre-application advice from Stephen Eccles of Highways: which stated that "The implementation of the development would result in an increase of HGV movements on the local highway network. The standard of the nearby roads is such that it should not result in a significant negative impact". She should refer to the log of incidents on Wilden Road and explain that large lorries cannot negotiate the bends without crossing the white lines and using the middle of the road and they cannot pass vehicles travelling in the opposite direction and they cut deep ruts into the edge of the road which present a hazard to other motorists. She should also refer to the advice from Simon Deards and the police.
- The area outside Toad Hall nursery on Church Road is formally considered for the installation of a 20mph limit.
- Improvements are made to FP17 to allow safe pedestrian access to the playing field.

Cllr. G. Palmer seconded the proposal and Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

Cllr. P. Ball suggested the Parish Council invite the children from the nursery to draw pictures to add to 20mph reminder signs. Councillors supported the idea.

Cllr. E. Pegler confirmed that the Parish Council would do everything they could to have a representative at the planning committee to discuss the application.

Cllr. T. Frew proposed that the Parish Council pay £1250 (50% of the cost) towards the "Unsuitable for HGVs" signs and invite the rest of the village to contribute the remainder. Cllr. T. Frew proposed that the Parish Council underwrite any shortfall. Cllr. L. Knight seconded the proposal and Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

6. Defibrillator

Consider how to allocate funds to pay for defibrillator basic annual support package with Community Heartbeat Trust (£302.40 or £252 excl VAT outstanding for Year 2 to 1st October 2017 and Year 3 to October 2018) and a further £126 + VAT for Year 4 to October 2019.

The Clerk explained that the Village Hall had signed up to this maintenance contract in 2015 and paid the first annual subscription of the four year contract. The contract covers the cost of replacement pads and batteries. However, the hosting agreement we have with the Village Hall Committee expressly states that the Parish Council is responsible for taking out a maintenance contract. Andrew Dewey continues to carry out the regular inspections and upload them to the web.

Cllr. L. Knight proposed that the Parish Council pay this out of the general maintenance budget / contingency funds. Cllr. E. Pegler seconded the proposal and Councillors were unanimously in agreement.

Payments

Two further payments were approved for:

- £60.41 to Bedford Timber for edging boards for the play area
- £19.91 to Wildforms for wildlife identification posters for the bird hide from Country Park funds

The meeting closed at 8.50pm