

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Colmworth Parish Council held on Thursday 05th November 2020 at 7.00pm.

As permitted by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 the meeting was conducted online.

Present: Councillor Pegler (Chair), Councillor Frew, Councillor Palmer, Councillor Brightman, Councillor Knight

Apologies: Councillor Ball,

Clerk: Anne Papé

2020/069. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Ball

2020/070. Declarations of interest

2020/071. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 03rd September 2020

The minutes were accepted and approved.

2020/072. Public Open Forum.

Standing Orders will be suspended for a period of approximately 15 minutes so that members of the public may discuss any items on the agenda or request items to be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

2020/073. Planning.

Discuss the Call for Sites and agree actions

The Borough Council had "Called for Sites" to meet their required housing target imposed by the government. Graham Palmer gave an overview of the potential impact of the Denybrook Garden Village site and its proposed 10,200 plus dwellings to be built along with amenities, if selected this particular site would impact Colmworth parish greatly and this was discussed in detail e.g. it will be two thirds the size of St Neots. Councillors had been on two calls with the Mayor to express their concerns and the Parish Council now had a direct line into the Planning Department. Colmworth Parish Council councillors were also in contact with Wyboston and Staple & Duloe Parish Councils to gain their view on the subject.

There was also concerns raised that the residents of Colmworth Parish had not engaged in any discussion with the Parish Council post the publication on the ColmworthT advising of the "Call for Sites", including several sites within the Colmworth Parish as well as the Denybrook Garden Village proposal. It was discussed about producing a leaflet informing residents of the "Call for Sites" including Denybrook Garden Village and delivering a copy to every home within the parish.

Proposed – Councillor Knight, Second – Councillor Brightman. Agreed by all

Action – Councillor Pegler and Councillor Palmer. To produce the content of the leaflet.

Councillor Stephen Moon was very informative of the selection process and that the consultation period post selection of sites would be May/June 2021, ratification of the call for sites would be in December, 2022.

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

Discuss Ward Councillor Declaration of Interests and concerns around representation regarding the Call for Sites.

The Parish Council agreed to arrange a meeting with Borough Councillors Moon, Towler and Martin-Moran-Bryant and representatives from Staploe/Duloe and Wyboston/Colesden/Chawston Parish Councils. Councillor Moon would contact Richard Fuller MP to request his attendance at the meeting.

The Parish Council agreed that the Chair would contact Councillor Wootton to discuss the matter of effective representation and that the Chair would produce a letter on behalf of Colmworth Parish Council to send to Councillor Wootton. The letter would ask Councillor Wootton to consider his position and his ability to represent the Ward. This letter would be shared with other affected Parish Councils

Proposed – Councillor Pegler, Seconded – Councillor Frew. Agreed by all

Action – Clerk to arrange meeting for the week of the 23/11/2020.

Review Planning Application Policy

The policy was circulated prior to the meeting. The Parish Council agreed to accept the policy.

Proposed – Councillor Palmer – Seconded – Councillor Brightman

2020/074. Defibrillator

Agree undertaking of defibrillator checks

Councillor Brightman volunteered to take over the defibrillator checks. Mr Dewy would be asked if he could continue the checks until end of lock down. The Clerk could then show Councillor Brightman how to undertake the checks.

Action – Clerk to contact Mr Dewey

2020/075. Country Park, Playing Field, Gardening Club and Triangle

General update on the Country Park, Gardening Club and the Triangle

A report on the Country Park was supplied by Councillor Frew. See Appendix 1.

Triangle volunteers would be looking to carry out further maintenance, this would be in line with Covid-19 guidelines

Councillor Frew commented on the planting carried out by Councillor Knight in the planter by the Triangle.

Update on Asset Register by Councillor Brightman

Councillor Brightman had not completed the inspection of assets as yet.

Action - Clerk to send asset register to Councillor Brightman

Discuss future maintenance of the Country Park

A discussion was held around the use of the Country Park and if a stated use had ever been formally agreed. The Title Deeds stated that the land was transferred for the 'recreation' of the village. It was agreed that records would be reviewed to see there were any details as to what the Country Park must/would be used for. The Country Park was purchased in 2008 and officially opened in 2010. The information collected would help to make decisions around the introduction of bye-laws.

The importance of all decisions regarding the Country Park being brought to and discussed and agreed by the Parish Council was discussed and agreed. This would ensure that a full public record was made of all decisions made regarding the Country Park.

Action - Clerks to collect details regarding original agreements for the Country Park and past decisions made around the use/management of the Country Park

Councillor Knight asked if a formal proposal could be put forward for the proposed hedge line. A plan of the Country Park with the hedge line indicated and details as to the mix of hedgerow plants. This would allow Councillors to make an informed decision. Councillor Frew could provide a map and further details for approval. The proposed hedge line was to provide a wildlife corridor. The Council agreed to apply to the Woodland Trust for tree whips in the meantime.

Councillor Knight raised concerns around personal safety/vulnerability for lone visitors to the Country Park where hedge corridors are forming now and in the future and these need to be considered when more hedges are planted in the future.

Councillors Knight, Frew and Palmer had met with Kevin Morgan-Pell regarding the management of the Country Park. Kevin Morgan-Pell advised that one meadow cut a year was sufficient. The proposed picnic areas would need to be cut on a monthly basis during the cutting season. A discussion had been held around the thistles and ox-tongue present in the Country Park. It was possible that treatment would be required to treat these in the 'picnic areas'. It was felt that there was some very significant encroachment of thistles and that this may need to be dealt with in the future. It was possible that there are Great Crested Newts (GCN) in the pond. It was agreed to carry out a test to prove the presence of GCN in the pond. The cost would be approximately £170.

Action – Clerk to ask Kevin Morgan-Pell when would be the best time of year for the meadow cut and would co-ordinate this.

The Chair left the meeting

Discuss quotations for Country Park noticeboard

Councillor Knight was looking into quotations for an information board/ notice board for the Country Park. A map could be built out using images of the Country Park. This would be discussed further once the use of the Country Park had been agreed

The Chair re-joined the meeting

Discuss and agree frequency and recording of playing field inspections

There had been difficulties with the use of the new inspection form. Martin Phillips was looking to change to recording the inspections on a spreadsheet.

The Parish Council agreed to inspections on a 4 weekly basis for the playing field and the Country Park. The Parish Council insurer had agreed that this was acceptable

Action – Clerk to contact Martin Phillips to ask if assistance was required with producing a spreadsheet.

2020/076. Ward Report

Receive Borough Cllr. Tom Wootton's report

The report was received and noted. See Appendix 2

2020/077. Highways, East-West Rail and Rights of Way

This item was discussed prior to the review of the Planning Application Policy under 2020/073

Update on East-West Rail

*Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk*

Signed Chair:

The actual route would be announced in early 2021. The Mayor has stated that he will do all he can do to assist the affected villages and houses.

Update on installation of Average Speed Cameras

Installation would commence the week commencing the 09/11/2020. UK Power Network would then attend to connect.

Discuss any Highways matters

The Parish Council discussed the proposed change to the stack location for Luton Airport. The route would go directly over Colmworth. .

The meeting was closed to allow a resident to address the Parish Council with their concerns regarding the impact that this could have on Colmworth. The resident would send additional information that they had collected to the Parish Council. The resident was aware that a neighbour had written to Richard Fuller MP but they had not received a response as yet. The resident attending also recommended contacting Johnathan Djanogly MP.

Councillor Moon would connect with Richard Fuller MP. The resident would forward correspondence to the Parish Council in order for it to be sent onto Councillor Moon.

Meeting reopened.

Actions – Clerk to send information regarding the consultation to the villages in the Wyboston Ward and in the Great Barford Ward.

Actions - Clerk to forward Councillor Moon contact details to Councillor Knight.

The Chair had contacted Andrew Prigmore at the Borough Council regarding the HGV signs. Another traffic survey was to be undertaken after lockdown, once traffic levels had normalised.

It was agreed to write to properties where vehicles were parking on and therefore, obstructing the footway. Letters would also be sent to properties with 'rubbish' left on the edge of the highway; this could impact on the installation of the average speed cameras. It was agreed that the draft letter be sent to Councillor Knight for review before sending to residents.

Action – Clerk to draft letter to relevant properties

Discuss any Rights of Way matters

Councillor Pegler and Councillor Brightman would walk the Rights of Way to make an inventory of damaged signs.

Cllr Stephen Moon left the meeting 20.10

2020/078. Finance

Review receipts and authorise payments

Reviewed and agreed. See Appendix 3.

Receive the bank reconciliation

Received and accepted. See Appendix 4.

Discuss and agree budget and precept for 2020/2021

The initial draft budget was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillor Palmer talked through the budget. The proposals to date would result in an increase in the precept of 4.2%. This would be equivalent to an increase of approximately £3.34 on a band D property. Councillor Palmer and the RFO would continue to work on the budget and would work to estimate what would be left in reserves at the end of the financial year.

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

2020/79. Covid-19 lockdown

Agree required actions due to the Covid-19 lockdown

The Church had asked if the Act of Remembrance could be carried out by the Silent Soldier in the Country Park. The Parish Council had concerns around the event in light of the current restrictions. The Vicar would be asked to supply a Covid-19 risk assessment for the proposed event. The Councillors could then make an informed decisions. Contact details for those attending would need to be collected by the organisers for Test and Trace. A number of parishes had cancelled their remembrance events.

The Chair had purchased a wreath to lay on behalf of the Parish Council. This would be laid either during the Act of Remembrance or independently.

Action – Clerk to write to the Vicar requesting a Covid-19 risk assessment with Chair to be copied in.

Another issue of the Colmworth Chronicle was to be issued in the near future. Councillors agreed to produce the following articles:

1. Year in the life of CPC: content Councillor Peglar and Councillor Knight to support if needed
2. ASC's and Air corridor: content Councillor Knight and Anne Pape to support if needed
3. Call for sites: Councillor Palmer
4. Police: Councillor Brightman
5. ROW article asking for assistance to identify missing finger posts: Councillor Peglar and Councillor Brightman
6. Country Park and Triangle: Councillor Frew

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 07th January 2021

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

Appendix 1 - Country Park report

Country Park Report for Colmworth Parish council meeting on 7th November 2020

Meadows and Paths

Volunteers have cut back overhanging foliage and used bark from the churchyard to cover the path leading to and from the pond bridge to add traction to the surface..

Odonata survey

Alan Nelson a recorder for the British Dragonfly Society has shared a report of his findings subsequent to his survey in the park last Summer
Dragonflies recorded: Emperor, Brown Hawker, Black tailed Skimmer, Southern Hawker
Damselflies: Emerald, Azure, Common Blue, Blue Tailed and Ruddy Darter

Woodlands Hedgerows

Reports are that several visitors have harvested Apples and Sloes.
The Woodland Trust is offering free trees for schools and communities; applications are being accepted now for delivery in March 2021. A hedge pack of 30 would meet our requirements to extend the wildlife corridor on the Southern Boundary of the main park, but needs to be ordered via the woodland trust website asap, so we don't miss out again
(Our previous application a few years ago for hedging for the Southern boundary of the main park to extend the wildlife corridor could not be met as demand outstripped supply)

Pond

The water level is rising at last!

Further to the Report of Sept 2020 regarding presence of GCN in the pond.
I can confirm volunteers have not carried out annual maintenance of the pond, hopeful this will be carried out in late November.

For the record:

In springtime one of our regular visitors from Boinhurst claimed, for the second year in a row to have seen adult GCN in the CP pond, the sizes of the newts he described were those of a GCN as opposed to a common newt which is significantly smaller.

(In 2019 Park volunteers only saw what they thought were Common Newts; photos taken in 2019 by volunteers and shared with Michelle Robertson an Ecologist specialising in Newts confirmed our identification of the newts observed by volunteers as Common newts.)

In early Summer 2020, members of the British Dragonfly Society (Alan Nelson employed as Senior Technician at Environmental Analytical Facility based at Cranfield University) were surveying Odonata in the park, when they saw what they thought were GCN efts in the pond they shared photos taken with a view to getting an expert opinion. Subsequently Alan Nelson advised the agreed opinion from 2 of his sources was that they were GCN efts.

The photos were shared with Gregory Belcher at Wildlife Trust requesting advice, he forwarded our request to his colleague Laura Osborne who is a specialist in pond management, who duly provided advice regarding the protected nature of GCN and how to avoid disturbing them. Neither Greg nor Laura made any comment suggesting the photos sent were not GCN efts.

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

The photos were also shared with the ecologist Michelle Robertson, who had viewed photos taken in 2019 and confirmed our identification. Her response this time was the photos taken in 2020 showed an eft with tail filament and spots characteristic of a GCN i.e. a positive confirmation.

It was too late in the season to consider an eDNA test, the closing date being 30th June.

eDNA sampling or a survey by a licensed person would give incontrovertible evidence of the presence of GCN. eDNA testing would cost in the region of £220-250 significantly less than the cost of a bottle trap survey which could only be carried out by an ecologist with a GCN license. eDNA may be helpful in ameliorating any machinations arising on social media from those who are reluctant to adhere to legislation covering protected species.

A number of companies provide test kits, prices do vary slightly, the bulk of the cost is for the analysis of the samples. The optimum time for testing should be May of next year.

In the meantime, on the basis of the expert opinions received, park volunteers have proceeded on the basis that GCN are present and breeding, as such the logpile by the pond bridge has been converted into a Hibernaculum and volunteers have refrained from disturbing the pond.

Visitors need to be advised of the presence of GCN as they are a protected species.

Benches and Structures

The hide has been power washed and treated with a solvent based preservative, this should provide longer lasting protection than the water based solvent used to date on an annual basis.

All in all, despite the trials of 2020, the park is thriving and has provided a peaceful refuge for visitors from far and wide.

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

Appendix 2 – Ward Councillor update October 2020

Motion to save Great Denham Golf Course and keep ‘urban gap’

A motion proposed by Cllr Jim Weir (Kempston Rural Ward) was accepted at Full Council on Wednesday 14 October which stated that the Council must uphold rulings that the Golf Course acts as an urban gap and that any development in the area must be made in connection with a golf course.

Maternity Services in Bedford

A motion proposed by Cllr Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant (Great Barford Ward) was passed at Full Council on 14 October, asked the Mayor to write to the chief Executive of Bedford Hospital to ask them to increase the number of appointments a birth partner could attend during pregnancy. Though the Hospital have not come in line with national guidelines they have allowed partners at 11-14 wk as well as 20wk scans. They are also allowed to attend the delivery suite further than just the established labour. Whilst this is a good change we are hoping the Mayor's letter can help bring them in line with national guidelines.

Veolia Awarded Waste Contracts for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils

Veolia have been given the Bedford Borough Council waste contracts which means the Covanta incinerator site in Stewartby will begin taking in waste from both Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire too. We will continue to look for ways to mitigate the effect of this decision on those living in the vicinity of the Covanta plant and who are most likely to be concerned by the invisible particulate matter that the facility will emit. We continue to believe the Mayor and Borough Council should be looking for ways to destroy the business case for Covanta rather than using it to burn Borough waste and that of our neighbouring Council.

Response to planning white paper

The Conservative Group have submitted a response to the consultation “planning for the future”. In our letter the main points were:

- Unhappy at proposals to give local democracy less say, feel that this is vitally important to planning process
- Support the use of the neighbourhood plan as we believe the time put in by local residents led to plans that are beneficial to local communities.
- Also agree with BBC submission that there needs to be a solid plan regarding affordable housing

If you would like more information please contact the Conservative Researcher, Stephen Vallance: Stephen.vallance@bedford.gov.uk

Boundary commission

As I am sure you will be aware the boundary commission has made its proposals and we now have until 7 December to comment on them. In general there are a lot of improvements we feel need to be made and you can find out more the consultation here: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/bedfordshire/bedford>

It is worth remembering you need to follow 3 key factors for proposing new wards, there are as follows:

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

1. New wards should leave each councillor representing roughly the same number of voters as other councillors elsewhere in the authority.
 2. New wards should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities, and boundaries should be identifiable. Consider transport links, community groups and facilities, natural or physical boundaries, parishes and shared interests.
 3. New wards should promote effective and convenient local government. Consider the number of councillors for, the geographic size of, and the links between parts of the ward
- Please do submit a response at: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/have-your-say/20441?bbox=474108.5,235922,537332.5,275234>

Marking Remembrance and Armistice Days In 2020

Due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, and the importance of slowing the spread and keeping our communities safe, Remembrance and Armistice Days will be marked very differently in Bedford this year.

Remembrance Sunday falls on Sunday 8th November. Normally this would see crowds of people join an event on Bedford's Embankment, but this year, organisers at the Bedford Branch of the Royal British Legion are asking people to stay away to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

A socially distanced service for members of the Royal British Legion and local representatives will take place and the Royal British Legion and Bedford Borough Council are looking at plans for this to be broadcast online.

Given the recent further COVID restrictions there may be further updates in the near future.

Lane Closure into Bedford Starts on Monday 19 October

Cadent Gas are carrying out essential works to divert gas services that will see a lane closure from the A6 Paula Radcliffe Way roundabout to Clapham Road.

This will see one lane closed travelling southeast into Bedford past Sainsbury's from 10am. This lane will be reopened by the middle of December, at the latest.

This is part of wider works to make improvements to these roundabouts and help ease congestion as part of the A6 Northern Gateway. As part of the wider Transporting Bedford project, road and junction improvements have been carried out across the town which will improve congestion and road safety.

School Admissions

Bedford Borough Council's online admissions system is now open to all parents and carers whose children are due to transfer to secondary or upper school in September 2021.

Parents who live within the Borough who have a child in year 6 at primary school or year 8 at a middle school will need to transfer their child to a secondary school or upper school in September 2021. The transfer to Secondary 2021 round and the transfer to Upper 2021 round is now no longer available 12 September 2020 via the Council website, closing 31 October 2020.

For parents who have a child due to transfer to middle school in September 2021, the transfer to middle school application form will go live from 26 September 2020 until 15 January 2021.

For children starting school in September 2021 (date of birth between 1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017), applications will open 26 September 2020 and will close 15 January 2021.

For further information go to www.bedford.gov.uk/onlineadmissions

COVID-19 update

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

Bedford is borough currently at medium local COVID alert level (tier 1) however it is likely we will go into a nationwide lockdown on Thursday.

If you would like the latest COVID snapshot (as of 28 Oct) please find it below:
<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Social%20Care%20Health%20and%20Community/Covid19/covid19-weekly-statistics-28Oct.pdf>

More information available at: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/>

Track and Trace App

The government has released new legislation as part of its efforts to drive down the rate of coronavirus infection and support the test and trace system.

On Friday 18th September it became law for hospitality venues to enforce the rule of 6 or face a fine of up to £4,000 and to log contact details for customer, visitors and staff as part of NHS Test and Trace.

From Thursday 24th September, this has been extended so that it will be a legal requirement to display an official NHS QR code poster to help people check in to venues.

The NHS COVID-19 App also launched today across the country. It can be downloaded via <https://covid19.nhs.uk/>

New COVID-19 Marshals Operating In Bedford Borough

In October we saw the first COVID-19 marshals take to the streets in Bedford town centre, providing advice and information about how to stay safe and slow the spread of coronavirus locally. However, it must be noted they do not have the power to make arrests or break up any activity.

Funding has been provided by the Government to support and encourage the public and businesses to follow coronavirus measures to keep themselves and our communities safe.

The marshals will be working with the public, shops, businesses and partners to provide advice and information about the situation locally and action to take to tackle the virus.

Call for sites

If you need more information regarding call for sites please contact the Conservative Researcher, Stephen Vallance: Stephen.vallance@bedford.gov.uk

Cllr Tom Wootton: 07771575227 / tom.wootton@bedford.gov.uk

Appendix 3 - Receipts and Payments

Payments and Receipts for approval at the November 2020 meeting

Date	Payer	Receipts description	Money in
14/09/2020	Bedford Borough Council	Precept second installment	£7,480.00

Date	Payee	Payment description	Money out	
05/10/2020	Community Heartbeat Trust	Annual Maintenance	£135 (incl VAT)	As agreed in the 2020/2021 budget
05/10/2020	Morgan Pell	Country Park cut	£780 (incl VAT)	As agreed in the 2020/2021 budget
05/10/2020	WT Saunders	Playing field cut 4	£73.92 (incl VAT)	As agreed at the May 2020 Parish Council meeting
05/10/2020	Anne Papé	September salary & working from home allowance. (New NALC pay scales have been applied backdated to 1st April 2020)	£451.23	
07/10/2020	1 & 1 Internet Ltd	Monthly charge for email	£2.40	
02/11/2020	Anne Papé	October salary & working from home allowance	£195.17	
02/11/2020	Joanne Lee	October salary & working from home allowance	£302.08	

Payments for agreement

Date	Payee	Payment description	Cost
05/11/2020	Kompan	Bolt caps for junior swings	£24.00 + VAT
05/11/2020	Colmworth Village Hall	Ward funding for fees for land purchase	£1,500.00
05/11/2020	Martin Phillips	Ronseal (£36.95) Frost protection material (£12.08)	£49.03

Anne Papé, Clerk,
E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair:

Appendix 4 – Bank reconciliation

5 November 2020 (2020-2021)

Colmworth Parish Council

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (Clerk/RPO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (RPO/Chair of Finance etc)

A	Bank Reconciliation at 05/11/2020		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2020		26,056.30
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2020 - 05/11/2020		16,835.00
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2020 - 05/11/2020		42,891.30
			9,958.31
	Cash in Hand 05/11/2020 (per Cash Book)		32,934.99
B	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 09/07/2020	0.00	
	Colmworth Savings 09/07/2020	0.00	
	Colmworth Payments 13/07/2020	0.00	
	Colmworth Main 05/11/2020	32,934.99	
			32,934.99
	Less unrepresented payments		0.00
			32,934.99
	Plus unrepresented receipts		0.00
			32,934.99
	Adjusted Bank Balance		32,934.99
	A = B Checks out OK		

Anne Papé, Clerk,
 E-mail: clerk@colmworthpc.org.uk

Signed Chair: