

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Colmworth Parish Council held on Thursday 14th May 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 Knight (Vice-Chair), Councillor Ball, Councillor Frew, Councillor Palmer, Councillor Brightman

In attendance: Borough Councillor Wootton. Two Colmworth residents joined the meeting

2020/0028. Apologies

None

2020/029. Declarations of Interest and Confirmation of Changes to Registers of Interest

None

The Chair proposed item 2020/032 (Consider use of and future planning for the Country Park) be discussed prior to the public open forum. This was agreed by all.

2020/030. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 05th March 2020

Cllr. L. Knight Proposed Cllr. G. Palmer seconded All agreed

2020/031. Public Open Forum. (7.05-7.20)

A resident agreed that the Parish Council should move forward with the Country Park as discussed under item 2020/032. The resident felt that it was important not to exclude from the Country Park.

A resident asked that the village event was not held on a Saturday morning so that families can be available to attend. Holding the event after 2.30pm would make it more accessible. The resident felt that the paths in the Country Park were currently safe to cycle on. The resident was not suggesting that the area be used for BMX bikes. During the current crisis it was a difficult time for children to be able to get outside. The resident felt that the Country Park was a good location for children to learn to cycle. It was understood by the resident that the previous decision around bikes had been related quad bikes. The resident had noted that there were more children in the village now. The Country Park was a great asset for the village.

Councillor Knight asked if cycling caused an issue for older people using the Country Park and how this could be managed? The resident felt that cyclists would be considerate and make way for walkers.

Meeting reopened

2020/032. Country Park

a) Consider use of and future planning for the Country Park

The Parish Council had been planning to hold an event in May 2020. The event would have been used to inform residents about the Country Park, the associated costs and the current use of the Country Park and how it could be used by the village in the future.

Councillor Pegler talked through the costs of the Country Park including the loan to the Parish Council for the original purchase. The Parish Council had to ensure that there were always reserves available to meet the loan. Due to the costs of servicing the loan and undertaking general maintenance there were limited funds remaining for development of the Country Park; 18% of the precept was spent on the Country Park. The current maintenance rested on a small group of volunteers. The Parish Council needed to consider the future maintenance of the Country Park, encourage use of the park, encourage more volunteers, and share information regarding the history and costs associated with the Country Park.

The Council acknowledged that the use of the Country Park has increased during the covid-19 crisis. Councillor Pegler talked through the concerns around current activities in the Country Park such as cycling and camping and the position regarding the insurance held by the Parish Council. The Parish Council would need to risk assess for the activities that were taking place and make decisions on accordingly. The Parish Council insurance did not currently cover cycling in the Country Park. Councillor Pegler had spoken with a consultant and had requested advice and information on management of the Country Park and how to develop it. The consultant would also be able to advise on the health and safety in the current position.

The Parish Council agreed that it would want to continue to look at how the community would like to use the Country Park should it be more recreational, a nature reserve? Any changes from how the Country Park was used currently would need agreement from the residents and fundraising would be needed for any changes and/or improvements. The Parish Council would look to invite the village to an event in the autumn once more information and advice had been sought. The Council would seek information on any additional steps that needed to be put in place to manage the Country Park as it was today. The Parish Council could then investigate and consult on how to develop and fund the Country Park moving forward.

Councillor Frew advised that the Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust had previously visited the Country Park. The Woodland Trust may also be able to provide advice.

It was agreed that Councillor Pegler would investigate costs for the consultant. Councillor Pegler would bring the costs back to the Council for agreement.

It was noted that a large group of children, accompanied by adults, had been playing football in the Country Park. There were signs in the Country Park reminding users about social distancing.

The working group was looking into plans for carrying out maintenance tasks in the Country Park. Would want to look into carrying out work from the 24th May. The Council discussed the risks associated and the needed to find a balance between the risks of not carrying out the work and the risks to the volunteers. This would need to be assessed

Councillor Knight has received a complaint about rats in the bales. Councillor Frew would look into the costs for removal of the bales. All agreed to remove the bales.

Action – Councillor Pegler to request costs for a consultant's report on the Country Park

Action – Councillor Frew to provide costs for removal of bales

b) Agree contractor and specification for cutting grass paths in the Country Park

The Council agreed the quotation from W.T Saunders. The agreed number of cuts must not be exceeded without consultation with the Council.

Action – Clerk to contact W.T Saunders

c) Discuss matters relating to the Country Park

The Councillors discussed the current content of the information notice at the Country Park. The website address was to be updated and contact details to be amended to the Clerk only.

The Council agreed to mirror the signage at entrances to the Country Park. Councillor Knight proposed that temporary signage be put in place now and that the Parish Council apply for Ward Funding for professional signage that would be fitting for the Country Park.

Action - Councillor Frew to put temporary signage in place at the entrances.

The Council acknowledged that the western boundary footpath was not in the Country Park but on privately owned land.

The Councillors felt that it was not currently safe to cycle in the park. There would be delay in being able to get further advice due to covid-19. The situation would be reviewed once further advice had been received from the consultant. The Council had an open mind as to the use of the Country Park, advice would be sought, current uses and arrangements risk assessed, and a community event held to discuss further, to share information and consult.

2020/033. Ward Report

a) Receive Borough Cllr. Tom Wootton's report

Councillor Wootton advised that Ward Funding would be available again this year

b) Review Ward Funding projects

The Council agreed to apply for Ward Funding for signage for the Country Park

2020/034. Planning

a) Review and agree comments for application 20/00842/FUL, Erection of a new office building with ancillary parking and landscaping, Dacca Farm, Colesden Road, Wilden

No comments had been received from residents. The Council had no objections to the application.

Action – Clerk to respond accordingly

b) Review and agree local plan information request

The Council agreed to amend the details for Cornfields to read hotel.

Action – Clerk to return information request

2020/035. Highways, Rail and Rights of Way

a) Receive update on current status of average speed cameras (Cllr. L. Knight)

The installation of the Average Speed Cameras had been delayed due to covid-19

There had been no update with regard to the 'no HGV's' signs. The Chair would contact Bedford Borough Council to discuss.

Action - Councillor Pegler to contact Andrew Prigmore

2020/036. Finance

a) Review receipts and authorise payments – Appendix 1

The Council reconciled to authorise all payments.

Councillor Knight explained that some additional tree works had been carried out in the churchyard due to health and safety issues. Therefore, the cost had been slightly higher than expected. The Council had put a budget plan in place to cover the costs of tree works.

Councillor Frew asked if chippings/sawdust left on site from the tree work could be utilised in the Country Park. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Reverend Tim Wilson to ask for permission to use the chippings/sawdust. Councillor Knight advised that Reverend Tim Wilson would also need to be contacted for permission to take any of the logs as well.

Action – Clerk to raise payments

Action – Clerk to contact Reverend Tim Wilson

b) Update on accounts

The accounts for 2019/2020 had been updated and year end was in progress.

c) Review Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Council reviewed and reconciled to accept the Effectiveness of Internal Audit document

d) Review Audit Plan

The Council reviewed and reconciled to accept the Audit Plan

e) Review Audit of Accounts template

The Council reconciled to accept the Audit of Accounts template

2020/037. Review of affiliations

The Council reconciled to renew the affiliation with Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils for 2020/2021

2020/038. Review land and asset registers and insurance

a) Review asset register and agree physical inspection of assets

Street lighting had been removed from the asset register. The asset register was agreed by all.

The physical inspection of assets would be undertaken once the lockdown restrictions had been lifted. The inspections were usually undertaken by Councillors Brightman and Frew.

Martin Phillips would be asked to clean the village gates once he felt comfortable to do so. Martin Phillips was to be asked if the green growth could be removed.

Action – Clerk to contact Martin Phillips

b) Review land register

There were no changes to the land register and the register was agreed by all.

c) Review quotations and agree insurance

Councillor Pegler proposed that the quotation from Pen be accepted. This was agreed by all.

Action – Clerk to contact insurers accordingly.

2020/039. Police and crime

a) Receive crime reports

The crime statistics were circulated prior to the meeting (appendix 2). Councillor Brightman talked through the statistics.

2020/040. Playing Field, Gardening Club and Triangle

a) Agree contractor and specification for cutting and treating the grass on the playing field

The Council agreed the quotation from Will Saunders with the moss treatment to be undertaken on a bi-annual basis. The agreed number of cuts must not be exceeded without consultation with the Council.

Action – Clerk to advise W.T Saunders

b) Discuss matters relating to the Playing Field and Gardening Club/

The playing field remained locked as per guidance from central government

The annual play area inspection had been undertaken. The Council agreed that Martin Philips be asked to undertake the remedial work with the work to be prioritised according to

the scoring. Martin Phillips would be asked to provide an estimate of time needed to carry out the work.

Andy Clarke had a key for the front gate to the playing field to allow access.

Councillor Frew asked Borough Councillor Wootton if the application for Ward Funding for a strip of land adjacent to the village hall could be reviewed. The Clerk would update Borough Councillor Wootton as to the latest correspondence.

Action – Clerk to contact Martin Philips

Action – Clerk to Forward relevant information to Borough Councillor Wootton

2020/041. Website

a) Review of new website

Councillor Palmer was preparing a list of items for inclusion on the new Parish Council website.

Councillor Frew would prepare and submit a piece on the History of the Country Park

Date of Next Meetings: 02nd July

Until the issue of cycling in the Country Park could be considered again at a future meeting, it was agreed that Councillor Pegler would contact the resident regarding the current position.

Councillor Frew would check if the village hall was available for future Parish Council meetings. Councillors felt that it would be more appropriate to use the hall for future meetings rather than the meeting room.

Appendix 1

Payments and Receipts from 01st April 2020 - 29th April 2020 for approval

Date	Receipts description	Money in
21-Apr-20	Bedford Borough Council precept	£7,480.00
29-Apr-20	Barclays bank	£125.00

Date	Payment description	Money out
08-Apr-20	1 & 1 Internet	£2.40
15-Apr-20	Clerk's salary (Mar 2020)	£348.93
16-Apr-20	Community Heartbeat	£162.00
17-Apr-20	Martin Phillips - Play area inspection	£20.40
17-Apr-20	BBC election costs	£39.71
17-Apr-20	Ladywell Accountants	£75.00
17-Apr-20	N Frew (snowdrops)	£102.99
23-Apr-20	HMRC	£145.20
28-Apr-20	Clerk's salary (Apr 2020)	£399.73
28-Apr-20	Startboard Systems (Scribe annual charge)	£308.40

Payments for Agreement

Payee	Payment description	Amount
BATPC	Affiliation fee	£93.00
Eyelid Productions	Website + annual support	£620.00
Anne Pape	Reimbursement Office 365 renewal (Annual)	£59.99
Anne Pape	Reimbursement Cloud Next Site Hosting (Annual)	£47.98
Anne Pape	Reimbursement Cloud Next .gov.uk domain (biennial payment)	£108.00
Anne Pape	Clerks salary (May 2020)	£399.73
Brightman Brothers	Church tree works	£864.00

Appendix 2

Crime statistics

Recorded Date	Committed From	Committed To	Offence	Street
23/04/2020	11/04/2020 00:00	13/04/2020 00:00	Assault without Injury - Common assault and battery	Colley Close