

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Colmworth Parish Council held on Thursday 07th January 2021 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

In Attendance: Borough Councillor Wootton and 3 members of the public.

Clerk: Anne Papé

2021/001. Apologies

2021/002. Declarations of interest

Councillor Knight declared a personal interest in item 2021/005 - planning application 20/02959/FUL

2021/003. Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 05th November 2020

The Parish Council reconciled to approve the minutes

Proposed - Councillor Pegler, Seconded - Councillor Knight

2021/004. Public Open Forum.

The meeting was closed to allow members of the public to address the Council

2021/005. Planning.

Discuss and agree comments for planning application 20/02959/FUL. Single storey extension on east elevation. The Old Piggery, 3 Church Lane, Colmworth

The meeting was closed to allow the resident to address the Councillors. The meeting was reopened. The Parish Council objected to the current application; the glazed section would impact the privacy of the neighbouring properties. The historical and architectural character of the property must be considered by the Borough Council Planning Officers, along with the comments from neighbouring properties.

Discuss the Call for Sites and proposal for Denybrook Garden Village

Councillors had previously spoken with the Mayor of Bedford regarding the proposal for the Garden Village. Councillor Pegler and Councillor Palmer had also attended a meeting of Wyboston Parish Council to discuss the matter. Councillor Pegler had spoken with the Chair of Staploe and Duloe Parish Council and would be speaking with Little Staughton Parish Council.

Councillor Pegler had spoken with Borough Councillor Wootton about the Parish Council's concerns regarding his position as Borough Councillor for the village. Councillor Pegler had drafted a letter to Councillor Wootton regarding the matter.

Councillor Palmer talked through the proposal for Denybrook Garden Village. The site would accommodate just over 10,000 dwellings and associated amenities. This would be equivalent to the size of Biggleswade. Councillor Palmer had submitted comments to Bedford Borough Council Planning regarding the proposal, as given in the Call for Sites. Councillor Palmer had contacted a consultant to request a quotation to supply professional advice. CPRE had also been contacted and a reply was awaited.

Councillor Palmer would draft an information post for the Parish Council Facebook page. This would be an opportunity to highlight the issue to residents and would invite residents to contact the Parish Council directly to put forward comments. It was also suggested to hold a Zoom meeting for residents to allow for local discussion.

Action – Councillor Palmer to produce information for Facebook page

2021/006. Ward Report

Receive Ward Councillor report

The report was circulated prior to the meeting and was noted by the Parish Council - Appendix 1.

2021/007. Highways, East-West Rail and Rights of Way

Discuss Luton Airport Stack consultation.

The Parish Council had contacted Against Luton Airport Stack; a pressure group that was campaigning against the proposed stack. The Parish Council resolved that the Chair would contact Richard Fuller MP.

Action – Councillor Pegler to Richard Fuller MP

Average Speed Cameras - post installation update

The average speed cameras were now fully installed. The Parish Council agreed that Councillor Knight would request that the average speed camera sign be moved closer to the gates coming from Bushmead. Quarterly reports had been requested from Bedford Borough Council for activity from the ASC's.

Action – Clerk to formally request reports from Andrew Prigmore and confirm timing of the reports.

Action – Councillor Knight to request re-siting of average speed camera sign.

Update on East-West Rail

No update

Discuss parking on the kerb

The Parish Council agreed to send letters, by Royal Mail, to areas where parking on the pavement and kerb was an issue. Councillor Knight would work with the Clerk to address this.

Action – Clerk and Councillor Knight to arrange letters

Discuss removal of 30MPH warning signs

Councillor Knight had requested a quotation from Bedford Borough Council for removal of the 30mph warning signs.

Discuss rumble strips at Bushmead Crossroads

The Clerk had raised the reinstatement of the rumble strips with Bedford Borough Council following the resurfacing of the road. This would be reported again via the Highways Helpdesk

Action – Clerk to report rumble strips

Discuss any Highways matters

No additional matters raised.

Discuss any Rights of Way matters

A number of Rights of Way finger post signs were down on the Wilden Road and needed to be reinstated.

Councillor Brightman had asked residents to report any issues they noted when walking on the Rights of Way network.

Action - Clerk to contact the Rights of Way Officer regarding the reinstatement of signs.

Action – Clerk to send contact details for the Rights of Way Officer to Councillor Frew

2021/008. Country Park, Playing Field, Gardening Club and Triangle

Discuss future maintenance and management of the Country Park

The Parish Council acknowledged that it would not be possible to hold the planned public meeting in the near future. The Parish Council would consider including a report on the Country Park in the next issue of the Colmworth Chronicle. It was noted that almost 10% of the annual precept was spent on the loan and interest for the Country Park. The Parish Council agreed to test the pond for the presence of Great Crested Newts in the pond. Councillor Pegler and Councillor Knight would work together on rules for the Country Park.

Councillor Knight had spoken to a bat expert. Councillor Frew would make contact with regard to a bat walk in the Country Park in the future.

General update on the Gardening Club and the Triangle

The Christmas lights had now been removed.

Action - Clerk to request a meter reading from the Manor Barn residents.

Update on Asset Register

The following would need to be added to the Asset Register:

1 bench on the playing field

Hidden Britain sign by the village hall car park

Channels End noticeboard

Life belt

1 bench in the Country Park

Water depth marker

Deep water signs

Wood carving

Bird bath

Action – Clerk to amend Assets Register

One of the HGV signs was in storage with Bedford Borough Council Highways. The projector was in storage with Councillor Pegler.

Councillor Frew confirmed that all items were present in the storage garages.

The Parish Council thanked Martin Phillips for replacing the Perspex in the Little Staughton Road noticeboard

Review inspections and lease for the playing field

The lease was circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. The lease remained acceptable.

The inspections were circulated prior to the meeting. Replacement parts for the junior multi-play and for the swings were on order.

2021/009. Finance

Review receipts and authorise payments

The Parish Council reconciled to approve all payments as listed in Appendix 2.

Proposed - Councillor Knight, Seconded - Councillor Palmer

Receive the bank reconciliation

The reconciliation (Appendix 3) was circulated prior to the meeting and accepted by the Parish Council.

Discuss and agree budget and precept for 2020/2021

The Council agreed the budget as presented in (Appendix 4) It was agreed to request a precept of £15,402 which would be a 3% increase. This would equate to an increase of £2.35 for a Band D property.

Proposed - Councillor Palmer, Seconded - Councillor Pegler agreed by all

2021/010. Discuss Clerk vacancy

The Parish Council agreed that Councillor Pegler would draw up an advert focussing on what the Council has to offer to a Clerk. The Clerk would also provide a statement.

Action - Clerk to confirm length of time served on the Parish Council for Councillors.

Action - Clerk to request quotations for payroll provision.

Action - Clerk to write to John Douglas and Thelma Marks to take them for the latest issue of the Chronicle which the Parish Councillors found very informative.

Councillor Knight would be happy to act as coordinator for the articles from the Parish Council again.

Councillor Pegler thanked the Councillors for all their hard work and for pulling together.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 04th March 2021

Appendix 1 - Borough Council Report to Parish Councils January 2021

COVID-19 update

The United Kingdom was placed into a National Lockdown yesterday. You must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary. You may only leave the home if you have a reasonable excuse such as:

- Essential activities
- Fulfilling legal obligations
- Education and childcare
- Meeting others and care
- Exercise and recreation
- Medical reasons, harm and compassionate visits
- Communal worship and life events
- permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

You can exercise or visit a public outdoor place:

- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble
- or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household

Colleges, primary (reception onwards) and secondary schools will remain open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. All other children will learn remotely until February half term.

You can find more information about the national lockdown regulations on: [National lockdown: Stay at Home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/coronavirus/covid-19/lockdown-guidance)

In Bedford there has been 5965 cases since the start of the Pandemic and there have been 1127 registered cases in Bedford in the last 7 days. This means there have been 650.3 people per 100,000 in Bedford (as of Dec 27) which has risen by 171.9 over the last 7 days which shows how rapidly the virus is currently spreading.

If you would like the latest COVID snapshot (as of Dec 30) please find it below:

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Social%20Care%20Health%20and%20Community/Covid19/covid19-weekly-statistics-30dec.pdf>

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

COVID test centres in Bedford

There is continued testing in Bedford at Borough Hall and Prebend Street car parks as well as University of Bedfordshire's Polhill Campus. Test results from these sites should come back with 24-72 hours. The government has updated its advice on testing. If you have any of the symptoms of Coronavirus, you can ask for a test through the NHS website or phone 119.

There are two walk through testing centres in Bedford for residents showing symptoms of Coronavirus. Drive-through testing is available 6 days/week at Gilbert Hitchcock House, Bedford Hospital and 5 days/week at Borough Hall. Both can be booked through the national testing website.

If you're an essential worker (see full list) you can apply for priority testing through GOV.UK by following the guidance for essential workers on the government website. You can also get tested through this route if you have symptoms of coronavirus and live with an essential worker. If you are unable to get to a testing centre, you can order a home testing kit through the national testing website.

You can find further details on testing on the government webpages.

More information is available here: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/>

Business Support Grants for Local Businesses

With the announcement that Bedford Borough entered Tier 4 from Saturday 19 December, businesses that are required to close will be receiving a business support grant.

These grants are set and funded by the Government at a national level and administered by Bedford Borough Council.

Businesses that received a grant from the Council due to the last national lockdown because their business was required to close, and businesses that were required to close again under the Tier 4 restrictions a further grant will be paid automatically. These businesses have already been contacted by the Council to let them know when to expect their grant.

The Council should have sent grants automatically by bank transfer on Monday 21 December, which means they should already have been received.

In addition, if a local business ratepayer believes they are eligible for this grant funding but did not receive a grant during the last lockdown they are asked to fill out the online form at www.bedford.gov.uk/bsg which will be available from Monday 21 December.

Any businesses who have not received the grant but believe they should have should contact Bedford Borough Council to discuss the matter and should there be problems they should contact their Ward Councillor.

PSPO to Tackle Street Drinking Comes Into Force

Following public consultation, Bedford Borough Council has approved a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle street drinking and related anti-social behaviour in the area of Bedford town centre. This replaces the old Alcohol Free Zones.

This PSPO is set to come into force from Wednesday 16 December and is set to remain in place for three years initially.

This PSPO would prohibit people consuming alcohol or having an open container of alcohol in the defined area, to prevent anti-social behaviour. It covers the town centre from the Embankment in the south, St Cuthbert's Street in the east, Landsdowne Road, Roff Avenue and De Parys Avenue in the north, and Ashburnham Road in the west.

Once in place, the Order gives the Police and authorised officers' powers to enforce against those breaking it. This enforcement can range from asking the person to surrender the alcohol, issuing a Community Protection Notice, a criminal behaviour order, to issuing a fixed penalty notice. The Council will continue to offer support for people where appropriate, such as referral to alcohol support services.

This PSPO proposal followed a wide-ranging consultation conducted by the Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership in 2019, where alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in the town centre came back as a key concern for people.

In the consultation to introduce this Order, 90.7% of the over 500 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

Public Reminded to Report Dead Wildfowl to DEFRA

Following confirmation of some bird flu cases in Bedford's wild bird population, the Council is reminding people to contact DEFRA if they spot any dead swans, geese, ducks or any other wild birds.

Avian Influenza (bird flu) spreads from bird to bird by direct contact or through contaminated body fluids or faeces, or via contaminated feed, water or by dirty vehicles, clothing and footwear. It isn't an airborne virus.

An 'Avian Influenza Prevention Zone' was declared across the whole of England in November, and from today all bird keepers in England are required to keep their birds indoors.

Public Health advises that the risk to public health from bird flu is very low. While some strains can pass to humans, it is very rare and requires very close contact between the human and infected birds.

Nevertheless, the public are reminded to not touch or pick up any dead or visibly sick birds. If you find any dead wild birds such as swans, geese or ducks you should report them the DEFRA helpline on 03459 33 55 77. There will be notices going up along the Embankment with this information and further advice.

Executive meeting on Wednesday 6 January 2021

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report is available here:
<http://www.councillorsupport.bedford.gov.uk/documents/s52805/Item%2006%20BBSCB%20Annual%20Report%202019%20-%202020%20covering%20report.pdf>

Adoption of housing strategy to cover 2021-26. The Housing strategy is available here:

<http://www.councillorsupport.bedford.gov.uk/documents/s52809/Item%2007%20Housing%20Strategy%20Appendix%20B.pdf>

Transfer of environmental agency control measures at Duckmill and Newnham Weir

<http://www.councillorsupport.bedford.gov.uk/documents/s52810/Item%2008%20Transfer%20of%20Environment%20Agency%20public%20safety%20measures.pdf>

Budget

2021/22

5. Details

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to determine the estimated surplus/deficit on the Collection Fund as at 31 March in respect of Council Tax prior to 15 January. This will enable the precepting authorities to take into account their share of any surplus or deficit before finalising their precepts for 2021/2022.

The table below identifies the actual surplus as at 31 March 2020, the estimated deficit on the Collection Fund relating to Council Tax as at 31 March 2021, and how the deficit is to be shared in accordance with current regulations:

Estimated Deficit Calculation	£		£
Balance in the Collection Fund relating to Council Tax as at 31 March 2020 after allowing for bad debts			615,000
Less: Surplus/(Deficit) paid in 2020/2021 (based on forecast made in previous year)			
Bedford Borough Council	434,318		
The Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire	57,124		
Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority	27,828		
			519,270
			95,730
Add: Estimated Surplus/(Deficit) in 2020/2021			(1,151,613)
Estimated Surplus/(Deficit) at 31 March 2021 for Distribution (see below)			(1,055,883)
Share of Estimated Surplus/(Deficit) Calculation	2020/2021 Precept	% ⁽²⁾	Share of Deficit
	£		£
Bedford Borough Council (including Parishes) ⁽¹⁾	97,244,328	83.62%	(882,961)
The Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire	12,925,401	11.11%	(117,360)
Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority	6,119,287	5.26%	(55,562)

5.25 The analysis below sets out the calculation of the proposed 2021/2022 Council Tax Base:

	2021/2022 Band D Equivalent Properties	2020/2021 Band D Equivalent Properties	Notes
Gross Tax Base taking into account the current dwellings shown in the Valuation List as at 30 November	67,992.89	66,790.79	Note 1
• Reduction due to Council Tax Support discounts	(8,679.50)	(5,691.47)	
• Adjustment due to anticipated growth	502.86	771.75	
Adjusted Tax Base	<u>59,816.25</u>	<u>61,871.07</u>	
• Less Provision for Losses on Collection of 1.50%	(897.25)	(928.07)	Note 2
Recommended Tax base 2021/2022	<u>58,919.00</u>	<u>60,943.00</u>	
Increase / (Decrease)	(2,024.00)		
Increase / (Decrease) as %	(3.32%)		

It is unclear how much Council Tax will be raised by, though we are expecting a rise as the Council are expecting the tax base to decrease by £2m

It is possibly by borrowing they will try to cover some of the deficit but currently Bedford Borough is uncertain of how much support that they will get from the Government as part of COVID measures. We generally revise this report over the month and we will keep you updated on this part of the report once the situation becomes clearer.

Councillor Coombes responds to local residents concerns about planning

Cllr Coombes gave support for local residents who have been experiencing issues with the Planning Department urging them to listen to residents' concerns. As I am sure you are aware many parishes have experienced a multitude of problems with Bedford Borough's Planning Department and you may be interested to listen to his speech here:

<https://www.facebook.com/BedfordConservativeGroup/videos/1322776161391837>

Appendix 2 - Payments

Payments for approval at the January 2021 meeting

Payment date	Payee	Payment description	Money out	
06/11/2020	1 & 1 Internet Ltd	Monthly charge for email	£2.40	
16/11/2020	WT Saunders	Playing field cuts 5 & 6	£147.84 (incl VAT)	As agreed at the May 2020 Parish Council meeting
09/12/2020	1 & 1 Internet Ltd	Monthly charge for email	£2.40	
17/12/2020	Anne Papé	November salary & working from home allowance	£201.36	
17/12/2020	Joanne Lee	November salary & working from home allowance	£206.49	
17/12/2020	Martin Phillips	Playing field inspection & maintenance	£25.50	
17/12/2020	WT Saunders	Country park paths	£95.48 (incl VAT)	As agreed at the May 2020 Parish Council meeting

Payments for agreement

Meeting date	Payee	Payment description	Cost
07/01/2021	Martin Phillips	Play area inspection & replacement of glazing in noticeboard	£40.80
07/01/2021	Mazars	External audit	£240.00 (incl VAT)
07/01/2021	Anne Papé	Reimbursement of monthly Zoom fee	£14.39 (incl VAT)
07/01/2021	PWLB	Country Park loan & interest	£677.95
07/01/2021	Anne Papé	December salary & working from home allowance	£163.72

Appendix 3 – Bank Reconciliation

10 December 2020 (2020-2021)

Colmworth Parish Council

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

A	Bank Reconciliation at 30/12/2020		
	Cash In Hand 01/04/2020		26,056.30
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2020 - 30/12/2020		16,835.00
			42,891.30
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2020 - 30/12/2020		12,186.81
	Cash In Hand 30/12/2020 (per Cash Book)		30,704.49
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 17/12/2020	30,704.49	
			30,704.49
	Less unrepresented payments		0.00
			30,704.49
	Plus unrepresented receipts		0.00
	Adjusted Bank Balance		30,704.49
	A = B Checks out OK		

Appendix 4 - Budget

Budget 2021-2022	Draft Budget to Mar 22
REGULAR RECEIPTS	
Precept	15,402.00
Total Regular Receipts	15,402.00
Total Other Receipts excl VAT	0.00
Total Receipts excl VAT	15,402.00

	Draft Budget to Mar 22
ANNUAL PAYMENTS	
Clerk's Salary & PAYE	6,237.50
Clerks pension	0.00
Clerks other expenses	0.00
Councillors expenses	0.00
Training	30.00
Audit costs	65.00
Subscriptions	140.00
E-mail hosting	45.00
Village Hall Hire	151.50
Legal costs	0.00
Payroll administration	80.00
Data protection	35.00
Printer cartridges	80.00
Stationary	40.00
Other admin	50.00
Literature and information	0.00
Software	350.00
Website	225.00
Clerks WFH allowance (Clerk's employment expenses)	432.00
Insurance	640.00
TOTAL	8,601.00

	Draft Budget to Mar 22
ANNUAL PAYMENTS CONT.	
Handyman other maintenance	25.50
Defibrillator maintenance	135.00
Other maintenance	150.00
Churchyard maintenance	0.00
Annual Play Area Inspection (ROSPA)	95.00
Playing field grass	816.62
Playing field hedge	150.00
Handyman play area inspection and tasks	438.60
Handyman other playing field maintenance	150.00
Playing field / play area maintenance & consumables	0.00
Playing field materials and parts	0.00
Playing field bark top-up	356.00
Playing field assets	0.00
Country Park grass cutting	618.28
Country Park sundries	420.00
Country Park meadow cutting	650.00
Country Park Loan Interest	631.00
Public Works Loan Board Principal repayment Country Park	725.00
Tree work	700.00
Tree inspections	200.00
Venue hire	0.00
Admin costs	0.00
other payments	0.00
TOTAL	6,261.00
Total Annual payments	14,862.00

IRREGULAR PAYMENTS & TRANSFERS	
Transfers to Specific Reserves	450.00
Transfers to General Reserves	90.00
Total Irregular Payments & Transfers to Reserves	540.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS EXCL VAT	15,402.00
TOTAL SURPLUS / DEFICIT	0.00