

COLMWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Colmworth Parish Council held on
Thursday 7th September 2023 at 7.00pm at Colmworth Village Hall**

Present: Councillor Pegler (Chair), Councillor Palmer, Parish Councillor Marsh, Councillor Frew and Councillor Ball.

Apologies: None received.

In Attendance: Two members of the public and Mayor Tom Wootton.

Clerk: Lizzie Barnicoat

2023/22 Apologies

None received.

2023/23 Declarations of Interest

None received.

2023/24 Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 29th June 2023

The Council accepted the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Councillor Pegler – Proposed. Councillor Palmer – Seconded. All in favour

The Chair adjourned the meeting at this point

2023/25 Public Open Forum

Resident raised Coffee with Cop feedback regarding speeding which was raised at the event along with the burglaries. Feedback from the actions taken after the last meeting outlined, encouragement given to record the vehicle information, direction and time for example, so this can be fed back into to the local police team for them to take action.

Between Chapel Lane and entrance to video, the initial repairs were made and Clerk to follow up when more permanent repairs are programmed in.

Letter to be collated by Clerk that requests the missing average speed camera data from end of 2022 to more recently as the Police have not provided the local authority with the regular monthly updates, for Chair to follow up.

The Chronicle deadline it was reported to be 11th September with the request for articles for the next edition.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at this point

2023/26 Borough Councillor report

Report had been circulated, newly elected Councillor had been invited to Parish Council meeting. Report to be shared with Chronicle.

2023/27 Planning

Local Plan 2040 public hearing sessions Block 2 hearings due to commence next week. Highways England lack of consultation engagement is a concern which is likely to be covered in the forthcoming discussions. Clerk to share a copy of the additional employment site communication from the Programme Officer recently issues from Bedford Borough Council.

To consider any planning applications received after the publication of the agenda if applicable – none received to date.

It was noted that a planning appeal that had been made for the previously submitted Cornfields application was turned down.

23/01966/TPO Elm - Remove at 1 Burnix Court – the Council agreed to have no objection to the application.

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Decisions to be noted

23/01117/TPO T8 Walnut Tree - Reduce south facing crown extending towards neighbouring property by 1.5 to 2 metres, cutting back to viable growth points at 4 Burnix Court - Permitted

23/00900/FUL First floor rear extension at Mill Cottage, Mill Road – Permitted

Mayor Tom Wootton joined the meeting at this point, concerns were raised over the lack of police presence and recent burglaries as well as continue issues with speed. Welcomed to write to Mayor raising these issues as speaks with Chief Constable regularly, so letter to be sent by Parish Council to Police Constable. EWR update asked about by the Parish Council, meetings are being held with the Mayor visiting the key parishes impacted by the final route to hear from residents and for Bedford Borough Council Officers to understand the local issues.

2023/28 Highways, East-West Rail and Rights of Way

EWR matters – Cllr. Palmer reported that local representative Group meetings continue to take place, with Cllr. Palmer asking for clarity on when the definitive route will be released, no response received. The latest regarding the potential leak along Wilden Road causing flooding has continued to be pursued with the Clerk feeding back to the local authority Officers that the Parish Council feel letters should be sent to the associated properties. These have been sent and Clerk has asked for follow up feedback.

VAS poles installation has been chased several times, as has the heavy vehicle usage signage for Wilden Road. The Village Hall site meeting with Highways Officers, Parish Council and Village Hall representatives, resulted in a works order being raised to refresh the grips in the verge to allow surface water to enter the ditch rather than run down the carriageway, these works are expected to be carried out shortly. An order was made to install an additional 4metres of kurbung on the south side of the vehicle access, but it has been ordered on a low priority so likely timescale is not known. Clerk has also sought the land agent contact details of the field adjacent to the Hall to seek their assistance as well with the clearing of the ditch, Clerk has recently received this information so will contact agent. Speeding vehicles follow up communications with local nursery and businesses had been actioned by the Clerk. Clerk had shared some data from the Borough Council enforcement van, it was noted that speed enforcement is not carried out by the local authority in locations which have average speed cameras in situ.

Andy Prigmore meeting due to take place to look at highway VAS signs and heavy vehicle signs shortly with Cllrs. Pegler and Marsh, Borough Councillor Weir to be invited as well..

Rights of Way – Cllr Frew reported the damaged footpath bridge has now been repaired by the Country Park, also some illegal plants spotted growing in a nearby landowner field.

2023/29 Village matters

Litter pick event took place on 2nd September, thank you to all those who attended.

The Parish Council currently has vacancies it was noted and there is the ability to co-opt.

Coffee with Cop event took place and was well attended, unfortunately as there had been some burglaries in the village again recently.

Police follow up had been sought on the local burglaries.

Bulky waste collection service had taken place.

Church tree maintenance had been followed up with Andrew Brightman between meetings, with advice being received that one of the sycamores on the boundary of the churchyard would need felling in the next year with a quote around £1300, the Church have asked for assistance with a contribution from the Parish Council. Further letter received from Kate Abrahams regarding further tree issues in the churchyard, there was a fallen sycamore which needed removing, it was noted the sycamore it is believed is being removed free of charge by a local resident. There has been a review of the expenditure on trees done by the Parish Council, it was agreed that currently the Parish Council is not in a position to support with trees financially at present. The letter asking for the Parish Council to consider expenditure support for maintenance and grass cutting will be responded to as the Parish Council are not yet considering the parish precept. There was a suggestion of seeking Ward Fund assistance this also to be placed in the responding letter, Councillor Pegler.

2023/30 Country Park, Playing Field, Gardening Club and Triangle

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Councillor Marsh has continued with inspections, these have been circulated to Councillors. External inspection report had been received and circulated. Cllr Marsh had highlighted that senior multi play is regularly having tape and signs needing to be replaced it was noted.

Councillors had discussed previously the quotation to remove the climbing frame in light of the cost implication to carry out the necessary repairs. It was agreed to have a communication with the costs of removal, repair and maintenance to go on social media and website with ideas welcomed to come forward plus in Chronicle, this had all been done and the Parish Council had received verbal feedback at the June meeting and two written communications as well since the June meeting. These had been shared with all Councillors. Clerk had explored alternative options including funding for a new structure and Cllr. Marsh had made contact with potential suppliers, sharing information on the considerations with Councillors. There had also been information gathered on the Ward Fund and how best to access this if needed to support work needed.

Having plastic barriers surrounding the structure is not possible it was noted, resident comment also mentioned electric wiring in houses is not all up to standards, however, the Parish Council with the public liability must ensure the equipment is fully compliant. It was noted that beyond using tape to fence the area off would be more costly. Village Hall has funds would they consider helping to fund or support the project was raised in the public communications, it was agreed to follow up this item with Councillor Pegler to see if the Village Hall could assist potentially with some of the finances towards the repair of the equipment. Councillor Pegler detailed that £2316 is needed for the bark replacement and tightening of parts excluding VAT. On balance it was felt better to repair than replace the equipment, finance options to be explored to fund the bark installation.

Playing Field hedge maintenance was discussed, it is budgeted for, but it has not been cut for a while, Will Saunders to be asked for a quote for a cut by the Clerk.

Country Park and Gardening Club report had been received and shared with Councillors ahead of the meeting. Country Park priorities including tree survey which it was agreed to accept quote for £360 for this to be actioned. The work is very reliant on volunteers it was noted, with some more significant hedge cutting potentially needed and further investment financially as well. Having increased signage for some items, a possible provision to allow the hedge work to be carried out more thoroughly if needed in the next financial year so this to be investigated ahead of the next meeting to enable input into the next Parish Council meeting budget setting. With Councillors to have a site visit walkround as well to assist with this and Cllr Frew to find out hedge cutting cost per hour.

Clerk to feedback to Gardening Club communication regarding water at the green triangle with outcome of the considerations. Councillors were disappointed they could not pursue an insurance claim for the damage done to the triangle after reviewing the challenges with this.

Any other matter updates raised previously at the last meeting will be covered in the action tracker within the minutes.

2023/31 Finance

Review receipts and authorise payments – see below, it was noted VAT reclaim of £2167.96 had been paid.

External audit report – awaiting final report but had received initial feedback that no questions or further information was needed.

Councillors reviewed and agreed the following payments, resolution passed. It was noted Councillor Pegler declared an interest in this item, so took no part in the discussion for this.

Backlight Ltd	Administration services July and August	£826.17
Eyelid Productions	Website support	£100.00
Colmworth Village Hall	Q2 Hire costs	£21.00
ROPSA	Play area inspection	£102.60
These payments below are only for ratification		
Ionos	Monthly charge for July email to be ratified	£20.40

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Ionos	Monthly charge for August email to be ratified	£20.40
Troy Planning and Design	Local Plan Denbybrook consultant work	£2601.55
W T Saunders Ground Care	Country Park paths mowing	£106.08
W T Saunders Ground Care	Playing Field grass cut 5	£78.42
W T Saunders Ground Care	Playing Field grass cut 4	£78.42
W T Saunders Ground Care	Playing Field grass cut 3	£78.42
W T Saunders Ground Care	Country Park paths mowing	£106.08
W T Saunders Ground Care	Playing Field grass cut 6	£78.42

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 2nd November 2023 at 7pm, Village Hall –to be held in the Randall Room.

Actions/Updates:

This continue to be displayed in the action tracker below.

Correspondence list

NALC Events Bulletin emails
Age Partnership email promoting services
BBC Planning weekly list email
Online playgrounds promotional information
CPRE update emails
NFP Workshops bid writing information
Beds Police crime statistics – circulated
Chronicle article communications - submitted
BBC Agenda for Standards Committee
Regular Colmworth Trumpet communications received
Playground & Public Park Services promotional information
Street Trading (new application), outside of town centre, ALL CONSENT STREETS
EWR Local Representatives Group communications
Webnos alerts of maintenance checks carried out
CPRE July and August 2023 Newsletter
BBC Officer communications on village litter pick in September
Colmworth Village Hall booking communications
BBC Local Plan public hearings information and communications
HMRC Government Gateway communications
BATPC New On-Demand E-Learning Training Offer from BATPC
BATPC AGM 2023 - Venue and County Committee Elections – are you members
BATPC Updated Breakthrough Communications Training Programme
BATPC Short-Term Clerk Support required
BATPC Parkinsons Finance Training – Autumn/Winter
BBC Borough Councillor contact details communications
Borough Council report – circulated

Meeting closed at 8.55pm