

COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Office

83 High Street

Colney Heath

Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk



MINUTES OF THE COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, COLNEY HEATH ON THURSDAY 2 JUNE 2016 AT 7.45pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Cook, Cllr R Solts, Cllr K Barnes, Cllr M Nash, Cllr D Crump

MINUTE TAKER: Mrs C Shepperson

OTHER ATTENDEES: District Cllr C Brazier

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC: One

35/16 APOLOGIES, ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was noted that Part Two is envisaged for this meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from, Cllr P McDonagh, Cllr C Thorpe, Cllr C Hathaway and County Cllr D Gordon.

36/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Nash declared an interest. She is married to the Common Ranger, Mr C Nash.

37/16 APPOINT LEAD MEMBER TO COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Defer until July meeting pending Terms of Reference or appointment of a permanent Clerk.

38/16 COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION

Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to ensure compliance with EU legislation – defer until permanent Clerk appointed.

39/16 SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES 2016/17

Defer pending recruitment of permanent Clerk.

40/16 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 12 MAY 2016

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12 May 2016 were accepted and signed, subject to the following amendment:-

09/16 – ACTION Parish Ranger amended to ACTION Parks Warden.

Proposed:- Cllr Barnes

Seconded:- Cllr Nash

41/16 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

The following matters arising from the above minutes were discussed by the Council:-

Generally The Council decided that the new Clerk would review all the items closed out or carried forward from April 2015 onwards when in post.

ACTION: New Clerk

09/16 – 2010, Horseshoe Field. The Council decided that all the items closed out or carried forward on this matter should be reviewed from April 2015 onwards when the new Clerk was in post.

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10/16 – NatWest Deposits. The Administrator had not yet had time to deal with this and the action will be carried forward to the next meeting.

ACTION: Administrator

12/16 – Enforcement. Cllr Nash followed up the lack of enforcement action on the red container in the Queen's Head car park. She was informed that the Head of Enforcement had it on his list, but it was not a priority. Cllr Nash also followed up the lack of enforcement action on Day's stoneyard where the field opposite was being used as well as their own premises. An inspector had visited, but only viewed the stoneyard itself. They have now agreed to return and inspect the field. Cllr Nash is awaiting an update.

15/16 – Grass cutting and Potholes. Cllr Barnes is about to inform County Cllr Gordon about the need for grass cutting at Russet Drive/Edison Close junction.

ACTION: Cllr Barnes

Potholes were reported at Pitt Drive, Highfield Park Drive, Station Road and Smallford Lane. Cllr Nash offered to report these to County Cllr Gordon and send a copy to the Parish Office.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

16/16 – Quote for Mowing. Cllr Nash has not yet obtained quotes. In order to get a good price a quote from a bidder who wants to use the cuttings for hay is to be preferred. She will approach Peter Whittaker, who uses the hay crop and did it last time.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

Cllr Barnes offered to enquire about possible bidders.

ACTION: Cllr Barnes

16/16 – Conservation Grazing. Cllr Nash has spoken to Willows Farm and they are willing to undertake grazing of the Warren with longhorn and highland cattle at their own cost, in exchange for some advertising and publicity.

The Council agreed to go ahead.

ACTION: Cllrs Nash and Crump

16/16 – Gas Board Works on Common. Cllr Nash has contacted the company again, but had no reply. The Council want to know what works they intend to carry out and when. It was agreed that a formal letter would be sent to them from the Parish Office.

ACTION: Administrator

18/16 – Football Club. Cllr Nash had spoken to Dean Penny. The broken door has been repaired for about £400, but this has not been claimed on insurance as there have been several claims recently.

It was agreed that the new Clerk will review the lease, including insurance matters.

ACTION: New Clerk

19/16 – Community Bus. Cllr Nash had not yet been able to speak to Cllr Thorpe. Debbie Fulwell had expressed an interest in taking over the administration. However, it was decided to defer any decision on that matter until a meeting was set up with SALPI to discuss two recent crashes. Cllr Nash agreed to progress this.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

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FAEC

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21/16 – Albany Tree Care. Cllr Nash had informed Albany Tree Care that they had the job and will arrange a meeting between them and Scholar's Court residents to agree a *modus operandi*. The residents have agreed to replant and keep the vegetation under control. The Council would like this undertaking to be supplied in writing.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

FINANCE

42/16 FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Report was received and noted.

43/16 INTERNAL AUDIT 2015/16

Members reviewed the Final Internal Audit Report 2015/16, prepared by Stuart Pollard/Auditing Solutions Ltd and received by the Council on 25 May 2016. The report raises several important issues.

Members RESOLVED to set up a Working Party, led by Cllr McDonagh and to include Cllrs Cook, Solts and Nash (and any other Cllrs who wished to attend). The Working Party will conduct a full review of the Report and the Effectiveness of Internal Control and the findings will be presented to the July Full Council Meeting.

Item R4 in the Action Plan with regard to EU Legislation on advertising contracts in excess of £25,000 was NOTED.

ACTION: Cllr McDonagh/all Cllrs

44/16 EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

It is a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 that the Council must ensure it has a sound system of Internal Control (Regulation 3).

Each financial year the Council must conduct a review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control.

The Working Party (Minute Reference 43/16) will review the Effectiveness of Internal Control in conjunction with the Temporary Administrator and the findings of the review will be considered by Members at the July Full Council Meeting.

ACTION: Cllr McDonagh, all Cllrs, Administrator

ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

44/16 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16

Cllr Cook, the Chair, read out all Items of the Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 (Section 1 of the Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2016).

Members RESOLVED that Items 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8 be approved. Items 2, 3, 6 were not approved. Item 9 was not applicable.

The Annual Governance Statement was completed in accordance with the Resolution and signed by the Chairman. HAPTC have advised that in the absence of a permanent RFO/Clerk, the Temporary Administrator should "pp" the Annual Governance Statement.

Members NOTED the Council's "yes" response to Item 5 on Page 2 conflicts with the Internal Auditor's "no" response to Item C on Page 5. (See Minute Reference 1994/CHPC58).

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A letter of explanation to the External Auditor/BDO in respect of Items 2, 3 and 6 and how the Council intend to address the weaknesses will be drafted by the Temporary Administrator and Working Party members for review/approval at the next Full Council Meeting and will accompany the Annual Return to BDO.

ACTION: Administrator

45/16 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2015/16

Members reviewed the Annual Accounting Statements 2015/16 (Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2016) and RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for 2015/16 be approved and signed by the Chairman and submitted to the External Auditor/BDO.

A full explanation of Significant Variances for each box 2 to 6, 9 and 10 (where there is an increase or decrease, which is greater than £100 and where the % increase or decrease is greater than 10%) will be prepared by the Temporary Administrator and will accompany the Annual Return to BDO. The explanation will note the change in Fixed Term Asset Register in respect of Colney Heath Village Hall where the Parish Council act as Custodian Trustee of the Village Hall (Minute Reference 2007/CHPC61)

Members noted the period of Exercise of Public Right commences on 10 June 2016 for a period of 30 working days to include the first 10 working days of July and ends on 21 July 2016. A copy of the Accounting Statements accompanied by a declaration stating that the Accounting Statements are unaudited and subject to change, a copy of the Annual Governance Statement, and a statement detailing the Exercise of Public Rights will be published on the Council's website no later than 10 June 2016.

ACTION: Administrator

46/16 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2015/16

Page 5 of the Annual Return completed and signed by Stuart Pollard/Auditing Solutions Ltd was reviewed and NOTED in conjunction with Items 43/16 and 44/16 above. A copy of the Internal Audit Report 2015/16 will be sent to BDO to accompany the Annual Return.

47/16 INTERMEDIATE REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE 2015/16

Members reviewed the Intermediate Review Questionnaire for the Year Ended 31 March 2016 and NOTED the requirement to complete the Questionnaire if the Council's income or expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2016 is greater than £200,000. The form was completed with positive assurances to each item (Q01, Q02, Q03, Q19) and the supporting documentation provided. RESOLVED the Chair authorised to sign the Intermediate Review Questionnaire for the year ended 31 March 2016.

ACTION: - Cllr Cook to meet Administrator to confirm correct Document References as very faint on photocopies supplied to the meeting.

48/16 APPROVAL OF CHEQUES & OTHER PAYMENTS JUNE 2016

The Council decided that the payment to Auditing Solutions Ltd. would be put on hold until the position with reference to the internal audit was clarified.

In addition, the cheques to the Football Club (plumbing in the toilets) and to Charles Morris Hall (extension) would be paid with the proviso that if planning permissions were not granted the money would be refunded to the Parish Council.

ACTION: Administrator

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Monthly payments as per schedule were approved subject to the above provisos.

Proposed: Cllr Solts

Seconded: Cllr Crump

PLANNING

49/16 LISTS, APPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, REFUSALS, ENFORCEMENTS

Cllr Nash agreed that until a clerk was in place she would circulate any planning issues that were relevant to the Council

ACTION: Cllr Nash

50/16 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Parish Council received and noted the Neighbourhood Plan Report and Updated Programme of 2 June 2016 presented by Mr Rawlins. The Parish Council expressed their gratitude to Mr Rawlins for his very great efforts under difficult circumstances and reiterated their willingness to meet expenses incurred by Mr Rawlins during his work on the Plan.

The Report highlighted two outstanding issues.

Possible conflicts of interest

Early in the process of creating the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Councillors suggested using signed declaration of interest similar to those Parish Councillors sign. It is believed that two declarations had been submitted to the late Clerk.

Key to reducing the risk of challenge at Inspection is to ensure these are completed as soon as possible in the format previously approved at Council in January 2016 (Minute ref 1935/CHPC43).

As agreed in January, and discussed at subsequent Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings, the Parish Council noted that it is important that the procedure for site allocation is transparent and documented. To ensure this Council confirmed that any people with a land interest, as set out in agreed Parish Council policy, are not to be involved in any discussions including absenting themselves from meetings, when necessary. Council re-emphasised this must be documented and evidence provided to Mr Rawlins.

Handover of documents and files from the previous Project Manager/Leader – The temporary clerk has already written to request the return of documents. Cllr Solts offered to write to say, that the Council has paid for his work and need to receive them by a set date. A copy of his contract would be included in the letter. Cllr Nash agreed to find this contract. Other action will need to be considered if the documents are not forthcoming.

ACTION: Cllrs Solts and Nash

It is understood that the Smallford Working Party wish to discuss some topics with Parish Councillors. The Parish Council expressed its willingness to meet them in advance of the proposed Steering Group. Mr Rawlins agreed to arrange the meeting with Cllrs Cook and Nash attending for the Parish Council.

ACTION:- Cllrs Cook, Nash and Crump

51/16 PARISH REPORTS AVAILABLE

The Parish Reports were noted and any issues will be reviewed when the new clerk is in post.

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PC Shepherd has taken an address from the rubbish dumped on the Warren Farm Track, and will follow it up. Cllr Nash will inform the District Council, as they removed the last waste dumped there.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

52/16 HIGHWAYS GENERAL REPORT

There was no Highways Report.

ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC OPEN SPACES; ALLOTMENTS & BUILDINGS

53/16 COMMON LAND, RECREATION AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

There were no reports about Horseshoe Field and future management by Oaklands College. Annual Inspection of Play Areas May 2016 – the ROSPA report was received and it was noted that the Parks Warden should pick up any minor repair items.

54/16 ALLOTMENTS REPORT

There was no Allotments Report.

55/16 BUILDINGS

This item was dealt with in Matters Arising (41/16).

56/16 COMMUNITY REPORTS

There were no Community Reports.

ADMINISTRATION- INFORMATION- CORRESPONDENCE & REPORTING

57/16 INVITED REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Brazier had spoken to Richard Sway about the 106 monies and was told that a new system is being set up. Once in place, Parish, District and County Cllrs will all be consulted about how it is spent. The Council agreed that greater clarity was required from the District Council on CIL and 106 monies both for the future and on past expenditures (eg Alban Way) and resolved that a formal letter be sent to Richard Sway to request this.

ACTION: Administrator

Cllr Cook thought that the Council should start to plan and prioritise its needs and demands including extracting such information from the Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that a higher percentage of CIL money would be available when the Neighbourhood Plan is in place.

58/16 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence to report.

59/16 PARISH MATTERS OFFICE & CHRONICLE

It was recommended that the Council should aim for an autumn edition of the Chronicle and that the previous cost of producing the Chronicle and ongoing arrangements should be picked up by the new Clerk as a matter of priority. Cllr Nash agreed to contact Jonathan Fullwell to inform him that the Chronicle was currently on hold until the new Clerk is in post.

ACTION : Cllr Nash

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60/16 EVENTS

Larks in the Parks. Chris Brazier confirmed this was progressing satisfactorily, but unfortunately the Highfield Trust had agreed to have a stall at the Fleetville Larks in the Parks on the same day. This arrangement was made before the Highfield date was finalised. It was agreed that more liaison was needed to prevent this happening again.

61/16 CRIME ISSUES

There was no crime report.

62/16 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

63/16 MEMBERS QUESTIONS OR URGENT MATTERS

The Highfield Cllrs will review the places in their Ward where vegetation from private properties is overhanging the footway and making it difficult for pedestrians to walk along the path.

ACTION: Highfield Cllrs

Items on all the minutes from April 2015 onwards that have actions carried forward will need to be reviewed by the new Clerk.

ACTION: New Clerk

64/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **Thursday 7 July 2016** at 7.45pm at Colney Heath Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

SIGNED
CHAIRMAN

DATE

07/07/2016