

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 7 JULY 2016 AT 7.45pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Cook, Cllr R Solts, Cllr M Nash, Cllr D Crump,
Cllr P McDonagh, Cllr C Hathaway

MINUTE TAKER: Mrs C Shepperson

OTHER ATTENDEES: District Cllr C Brazier

PUBLIC: One and Clerk designate, Lisa Chaplin.

72/2016 APOLOGIES, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies were received from Cllr C Thorpe, Cllr K Barnes.
Part Two is envisaged for this meeting

73/2016 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

74/2016 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 2 JUNE 2016

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 2 June 2016 were accepted and approved with an amendment to 47/16 where 'feint' would be replaced by 'faint'.

Proposed:- Cllr M Nash

Seconded:- Cllr D Crump

75/2016 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES

Item 16/2016 – Transco - Cllr Nash and Eddie Walsh had contacted Transco again about the works on the Common, but they have taken no action yet. At the previous meeting the Council had agreed that a formal letter would be sent to them from the Parish Office to find out what works they intend to carry out and when. This action will be carried forward for the new Clerk.

ACTION: Clerk

Item 21/2016 – Scholars Court - tree felling. It had been decided to delay the work until the birds finish nesting.

Item 48/16 – Football Club - The cheque to the Football Club (plumbing in the toilets) has been paid with the proviso that if planning permission is required, but not granted, the money will be refunded to the Parish Council.

Item 51/16 – Rubbish on Warren Track. Cllr Nash reported that the District Council had cleared the rubbish from the Warren Track.

Item 57/2016 – S106 Monies - The letter from the Parish Council to Richard Sway to request greater clarity from the District Council on CIL and 106 monies both for the future and on past expenditures (eg Alban Way) is still outstanding.

ACTION: Clerk

Item 59/16 – Chronicle – Cllr Nash contacted Jonathan Fullwell to inform him that the Chronicle was currently on hold until the new Clerk is available to deal with the matter.

Handwritten signature/initials

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Item 63/16 – Highways - Overhanging vegetation on Starlight Way. Cllr McDonagh reported overhanging vegetation at Starlight Way that obscured the view for motorists. This is a County property. The Council resolved that it should be reported.

ACTION: Cllr McDonagh agreed to take a photo

Cllr Crump reported that an overhanging branch in Smallford Lane had recently caused an accident to a lorry. The County Council had removed that branch, but others along the road are also overhanging. This will also need to be reported to the County Council using the online system.

ACTION: Clerk & Cllr Crump

76/2016 APPOINT LEAD MEMBER TO COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

This was deferred until September meeting pending Terms of Reference

ACTION: Clerk

77/2016 COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION

Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to ensure compliance with current legislation – This was deferred until September meeting

ACTION: Clerk

78/2016 SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES 2016/17

This was deferred until September meeting

ACTION: Clerk

FINANCE

79/2016 FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Report for July 2016 meeting circulated prior to the meeting was reviewed.

It was agreed to book RBS for Omega finance data entry for June/July and August (if required).

ACTION: Clerk

It was noted that a decision on the Parish and Town Council Pooling Arrangement was required before the end of August and the Council **RESOLVED** to remain part of the pension pool.

ACTION: Clerk

80/2016 INTERNAL AUDIT 2015/16

The Council reviewed the summary Action Plan.

R1 – It was decided to change 'periodic' to 'quarterly'.

R3 – The Finance Working party will consider whether the Parish Council needs to open a new account with a separate financial institution in order to safeguard assets.

ACTION: Clerk & Finance Working Party

R8 – The Council noted the need to review the Risk Assessment Schedule in the autumn.

ACTION: Clerk

R10 - 'Not' will be amended to 'now'.

ACTION: Clerk

R11 – The amount of cash required will be reviewed at the September meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

R17 – A Councillor will need to witness that the current imbalance (£576.00) on the net pay account has been investigated and corrected when the RBS Railtor contractor next visits.

ACTION: Chair & Clerk

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81/2016

EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

A Working Party led by Cllr McDonagh and Cllr Cook have conducted a full review of the Internal Audit process and the Effectiveness of Internal Control. The findings are detailed in a report, circulated to Members prior to the Council meeting.

The report and its contents were NOTED including the matters it highlighted that showed the lack of due process. In particular, the following points were NOTED:-

1. The Clerk, and possibly the Deputy Clerk, did not fulfil their statutory and fiduciary duty to bring full audit results to the Councillors which led to significant process and financial anomalies over the period 2004-05 to 2014-15.
2. The Internal Auditor did not escalate the non process improvements of Internal Audit Reports to Councillors or to the External Auditor/BDO (Internal Audit Statement in the Annual Return).
3. Councillors collectively did not provide diligent oversight of the internal audit process by not insisting on seeing the reports and thus did not review the Action Plans or track progress of issues.

ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

81/2016

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16

The Chair introduced the papers as a Part 1 item however Members RESOLVED that due to the content of the papers (Items 2, 3 and 6 on the Governance Statement 2015/16 contain Part II Minute References) the Annual Governance Statement, accompanying letter to BDO and supporting statements would be discussed in Part Two. Once the matters are agreed, the words 'Private and Confidential' will be omitted.

82/2016

APPROVAL OF CHEQUES & OTHER PAYMENTS JULY 2016

The monthly payments schedule was circulated at the meeting.

It was decided that item 1319 – printing of letterheads – would be reviewed.

It was also agreed to review the provision of phones.

It was noted that items 7335 and 7313 both referred to the same contractor. It was agreed to address this in the contract review.

ACTION: Clerk

FAE Subject to the above reviews the cheques were approved and signed.
Proposed: Cllr K Solts
Seconded: Cllr C Hathaway

PLANNING

83/2016

LISTS, APPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, REFUSALS, ENFORCEMENTS

Planning Applications and Report of Decisions since June meeting were reviewed.

It was resolved that Cllr Nash would submit similar comments on behalf of the Council to those previously sent on Application 5/2016/1664 (The Cock). These comments would be circulated to all Councillors.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

Cllr Nash also reported that part of the Welwyn Hatfield District plan referred to putting housing on the current site of Hatfield Fire Station. This Fire Station covers parts of Colney Heath Parish (Smallford, Sleepshyde, Oaklands) and any potential closure would affect our area. She had spoken to Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue.

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Their officer for planning, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Chris Bigland, had said that no work had been done on such a proposal. It was decided that Cllr Nash would write to

Mr Bigland and Hertfordshire County Council asking them to confirm when this work is likely to be carried out.

ACTION: Cllr Nash

Enforcement – Cllr Nash checked on three enforcement issues:-

- **Queens Head Car Park Container** - The District Council confirmed that they were aware of the container and would be taking action, but it was not a priority.
- **J. Day Stoneworks** - The District Council officers had visited the Stoneworks and taken photos. No more buildings were to be put on the site, but there would be no action to remove existing buildings.
- **Park Corner** – this issue was now resolved and a gap was to be made between the house and upgraded buildings.

84/2016 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A report was expected in September/October 2016.

85/2016 PARISH REPORTS AVAILABLE

Reports were received from Parks Warden, Common Ranger, Parish Gardener, and Graveyard Keeper. In future the Clerk will scan and circulate these.

ACTION: Clerk

86/2016 HIGHWAYS GENERAL REPORT

County Councillor Dreda Gordon had informed the Council that the Longabout Report was now due at the end of July 2016. The Council decided to write to the County Council on 1 August 2016 to request a copy.

ACTION: Clerk

ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC OPEN SPACES; ALLOTMENTS & BUILDINGS

87/2016 COMMON LAND, RECREATION AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

Horseshoe Field Smallford - future management/Oaklands College – Cllr Crump reported that Jeff Lewis has written to Oaklands reminding them of the project.

Grazing on Common – Cllr Nash reported that seven cattle were now grazing on the Warren. Anna Wolf had put them forward for registration with the Cattle Movement Service (the Parish Council must do the registration in future) but they have a long waiting list and this will not happen immediately.

Lynne Myland had visited the site and raised several issues. Firstly she pointed out rabbit holes (now filled in by Common Ranger) and secondly blocks sticking out from the gate, which could endanger a horse's hock. She has offered planks to remedy this and the Council accepted the offer. The Common Ranger will contact her to arrange this.

ACTION : Cllr Nash, Lynne Myland & Common Ranger

Ms Myland also pointed out that the Ranger will need protective gloves and a special tool for removing ragwort. The Council agreed to pay for these items.

ACTION Cllr Nash

The Council also decided that during the forthcoming review all their staff would be asked what PPE they need.

ACTION: Clerk

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88/2016 **ALLOTMENTS REPORT**

FAE Mrs Chris Gowens said that problems at the site had now escalated; the grass was tall and spreading seeds. It was difficult to see footing along the grassy sections. The Council regarded this as a Health and Safety issue and decided to see if Royce Paxton could strim the area as a matter of urgency.

ACTION: Clerk

FAE The Chair apologised to Mrs Gowens for the delay in addressing these issues. Mrs Gowens also raised the issue of vacant plots. The Council agreed that the Clerk would contact St Albans District Council to find out if they had a waiting list.

ACTION: Clerk

In addition, the Council will review the boundary/gates etc during the autumn review and noted that a maintenance contract needs to be put in place.

ACTION: Clerk

FAE Mrs Gowens agreed to send photos of the current situation to the Clerk.

ACTION: Mrs Gowens

89/2016 **BUILDINGS**

CHFC Insurance Claims – the cheque for the door repair was signed.

Lease renewal on Scout Hut due September 2017 – it was decided to defer this until the September meeting.

90/2016 **COMMUNITY REPORTS**

COMMUNITY BUS – Cllr Nash reported that Cllr Thorpe no longer deals with the Community bus. Debbie Fulwell will now administer the service. The Charity has agreed that Howard Tafts, who has had training and has a licence will be the driver. Cllr Nash will request that a copy of any revised contract is forwarded to the Clerk for a decision about the suitability of this bus.

ACTION: Cllr Nash & Clerk

VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE – the request for hirers of the hall to use the Parish Council's broadband was deferred.

TREASURE TOTS – This will be discussed in Part Two.

ADMINISTRATION- INFORMATION- CORRESPONDENCE & REPORTING

91/2016 **INVITED REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

District Cllr Brazier informed the Council that the advisory panel meeting on Tuesday 12 July 2016 would discuss the proposal for 1,000 houses at Oaklands/Sandpit Lane. Cllr Cook agreed to submit the following question to the Head of Planning and Building Control by lunchtime next Monday.– 'If the rail freight interchange site is available for housing how does this affect the pressure on our green belt sites.'

ACTION: Cllr Cook

92/2016 **CORRESPONDENCE**

CMH Hall VAT reclaim - Mr J Day had written to the Parish Office advising the Council had previously paid bills on behalf of Charles Morris Hall and reclaimed VAT and requested that this procedure continue in respect of the £8,000 grant over 2 years (2016/17 and 2017/18) ie. the Council keep the grant funds and pay the bills on behalf of Charles Morris Hall. Temporary Mr Day enclosing a copy of the HMRC guidelines on VAT 126 claims. NOTED VAT cannot be recovered by a s33 body where the supply for VAT purposes is

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between supplier and a third party. A charity; village hall management committee; parochial church council; parish meeting or a community association are not a s33 body and cannot use the VAT 126 form to recover VAT. The Council NOTED the need to clarify the issue of reclaiming VAT. Cllr Solts agreed to seek advice. District Cllr Day had written to the parish office advising the Council had previously paid bills on behalf of Charles Morris Hall and reclaimed the VAT and requested that this procedure continue in respect of the £8,000 grant over 2 years (2016/17 and 2017/18) i.e. the Council keep the grant funds and pay the bills on behalf of Charles Morris Hall. The Temporary Administrator had written to Cllr Day enclosing a copy of the HM Revenue and Customs guidelines on VAT 126 claims. NOTED VAT cannot be recovered by a s33 body where the supply for VAT purposes is between the supplier and a third party. A charity; village hall management committee; parochial church council; parish meeting or a community association are not a s33 body and cannot use the VAT 126 form to recover VAT.

The Council NOTED the need to clarify the issue of reclaiming VAT.

ACTION: Cllr Solts & Clerk

93/2016 PARISH MATTERS OFFICE & CHRONICLE

The Chronicle was dealt with under 75/16 Matters Arising from the minutes Item 59/2016.

94/2016 EVENTS

Cllr Brazier reported that about 200 people attended Larks in the Parks. The weather was good and there were numerous stalls and attractions. It was agreed that in future the leaflets would make the venue clearer and there would be more publicity via the Chronicle and website.

95/2016 CRIME ISSUES

Cllr Hathaway reported about 20-25 used cars parked in Roestock Lane. It was agreed to invite PC Shepherd to attend the September Parish Council meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

96/2016 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

FAEC Mrs Gowens' questions relating to the allotments were minuted under agenda item 88/2016.

97/2016 MEMBERS QUESTIONS OR URGENT MATTERS

There were no comments from Councillors or urgent matters to discuss.

98/2016 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next **Parish Council Meeting** to be held on Thursday 8 September at 7.45pm in Colney Heath Village Hall.

Meeting ended at 9.30pm

Robert Hook
08/09/2016