

PLEASE BRING TO MEETING
ON 10 DECEMBER 1997.

COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Colney Heath Parish Council held at the Pavilion, High Street Recreation Ground, Colney Heath on Wednesday 12 November 1997.

PRESENT Cllr. S. Parish (Chairman)
“ D. Crump
“ Mrs. S. Defoe
“ F. S. Ellis
“ Mrs. H. Lynch
“ Mrs. M. Nash
“ Miss A. Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE P. Barker – Hall Gardens
D. Becker 95 High Street
M. Hughes – 66 Oaklands Lane
Mrs. J. Jeffrey – 18 Roestock Gardens
Ms. J. Rowling – Markyate
G. Stephens – St. Albans CDC
P.C. Thorpe – St. Albans Police Stn.

Mrs. C. Pluck (Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES Cllr. C. Brazier (work commitment)

The Chairman introduced Graham Stephens from the CDC Technical Services Department who had attended the meeting to present his proposals for traffic calming measures along Colney Heath High Street.

Mr. Stephens explained that he had £13,000 to spend on the High Street and wanted input from the Parish Council on whether the scheme was considered value for money.

Councillors examined the proposals and commented on certain aspects of the plan.

RESOLVED to hold a public presentation of the traffic calming proposals from 5 – 9 p.m. on Wednesday 3 December at Colney Heath JMI School.

A press release and notices would be prepared for distribution prior to the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Stephens for attending.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 1997 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a true record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Page 1 – High Street Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that she had received no further quotations for re-painting of the white lines on the two Parish Council tennis courts at the High Street Recreation Ground.

Cllr. Miss Thomas gave the Clerk details of another local company who may be willing to provide a quote.

RESOLVED to contact the company for a quote.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Page 1 – Smallford Playing Field

The Clerk reported receipt of a reply from the Chief Executive of HCC regarding the use of Smallford Playing Field and the provision of a children's play area.

Mr. Hughes from Smallford Residents' Association reported that he was hoping to arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive and Cty. Cllr. Mrs. Sanderson to discuss the matter further.

Mr. Hughes undertook to keep the Parish Council informed of progress and invite them to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED to make inquiries about ownership of the piece of land at Smallford roundabout, at the end of Oaklands Lane, with a view to considering its suitability for a play area.

Page 2 – Hertfordshire SaverCard

Received a reply from HCC Environment Dept. regarding the Parish Council's queries about the benefits to schoolchildren from the introduction of the Hertfordshire SaverCard.

The HCC felt the new scheme enabled better monitoring of eligibility for reduced fares.

Page 2 – Salt Bins

Received a reply from HCC Environment Dept regarding the costs involved in providing salt bins.

Received correspondence from the HALC confirming that Parish Councils would not be liable for accidents while they were providing the salt for residents to use.

RESOLVED to await details of the location of salt bins in the parish before considering the matter further.

Page 4 – Finance

The Clerk reported that she had requested a report from the supplier on the level of use of dog bins recently installed at all the recreational areas.

Page 7 – Butterfields Recovery

Cllr. Mrs. Defoe explained the current situation regarding Butterfield's plans to relocate to London Colney.

The company has been operating from sites in London Colney and Colney Heath and temporary renewals have been granted for 12 years. The company has planning permission but Savacentre cannot develop until their plans are sorted out. The Secretary of State is involved and needs extra time. It is hoped a decision will be reached in November. If the company move to Haseldine Road the Colney Heath site will close.

Page 7 – Redland Aggregates

Cllr. Mrs. Defoe reported that she had responded to the Redland application for gravel extraction on land east of Coursers Road. She had forwarded her comments to the CDC but omitted to give a copy for circulation to Parish Cllrs.

Page 7 – Colney Heath Farm

Received a letter from the resident of Colney Heath Farm giving full details of accidents outside her property.

RESOLVED that the Common Working Party visits the site with a fencing contractor to discuss the installation of posts along the kerb.

2. MATTERS ARISING (CONT.)

Page 8 – Common Working Party

Received a letter from the CDC Environmental Services Dept. stating that any composters left when the offer closed at the end of the year would be available for residents in Colney Heath. RESOLVED to ask the CDC to inform the Parish Council of any spare composters after 31/12/97.

Cllr. Mrs. Defoe was concerned about the extension to the rear of no. 85 High Street and the possible encroachment onto the Common.

RESOLVED to ask the resident for a copy of the deeds to his property and to ensure that no building equipment was sited on the Common during the development.

Received a letter from the HCC Environment Dept. giving details of who to contact if fly tipping was witnessed.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Mrs. Nash write an article for the Chronicle to inform residents of who to contact.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no items to report since the last meeting.

4. SPECIAL BUSINESS

a) Peter's Green to South Mimms Gas Pipeline

Received a letter from the Highways Agency stating that they were unable to comply with the Council's request for temporary access off the A414 for use by Transco during the pipeline construction period.

RESOLVED to write to the Highways Agency pointing out that there would be more damage and disruption to Colney Heath and the Common if Transco were unable to access the pipeline route via the A414.

Received a letter from Rumball Sedgwick, land agents acting on behalf of the Parish Council, advising that the Council accept the pipeline easement offer from Transco of £25 per metre plus 10% disturbance costs for the 300 metre length of pipeline to cross Colney Heath Common. Received a further letter from Rumball Sedgwick requesting confirmation of acceptance of the above figures and asking for the Council's permission for Transco to dig an exploratory bore hole on the Common near to the river.

RESOLVED i) to inform Rumball Sedgwick that the Council accepts the £25 per metre for the wayleave but wishes to negotiate the disturbance compensation figure after work has been carried out.

ii) to inform Rumball Sedgwick that the Council agrees to the borehole samples being taken from the Common.

b) Colney Heath Chronicle

The Clerk reported that the post of Editor/Publisher for the Colney Heath Chronicle had been advertised in the Review Newspaper and on the Parish Council noticeboards asking interested candidates to apply to the Clerk, in writing, by Friday 7 November.

The Clerk reported receipt of three written and one verbal application.

Cllrs. discussed the applications and agreed to invite three candidates for interview on 26 November 1997 at the Pavilion commencing at 6 p.m.

4. SPECIAL BUSINESS (CONT.)

b) Colney Heath Chronicle (cont.)

RESOLVED to write to all applicants thanking them for their interest in the post and giving details of the Council's decision on the shortlisting. To ask those invited for interview to provide examples of previous work relevant to their application.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council grants permission for the Chronicle Working Party to carry out the interviews and make an appointment on its behalf, to be ratified at the Parish Council meeting on 10/12/97.

Received a letter from a Chronicle distributor informing the Council of a fellow distributor who had moved away without arranging for his round to be covered, and suggesting that the Council formally thank the resident who had agreed to take over the round.

RESOLVED to reply to the distributor and thank the resident who had agreed to take over the round.

Cllrs. discussed the lack of Parish Council submissions to the Chronicle.

RESOLVED to establish a rota of Cllrs. to write articles for the Chronicle at the May Annual meeting.

Cllr. Crump agreed to write an article for the Spring Chronicle.

c) 1997 Senior Citizens' Xmas Parcels

Received an up-dated list of Senior Citizens in the parish and considered any further amendments.

The Clerk reported that the 1 kg. tin of biscuits available from the Savacentre was currently priced at £2.99 per tin.

Cllrs. considered the arrangements for the purchase, delivery and distribution of this year's Xmas parcels around the parish.

RESOLVED to purchase the appropriate number of biscuits from the Savacentre and organise distribution as in previous years.

d) Herts. Advertiser – Distribution

Cllr. Mrs. Defoe explained her concerns that the Herts. Advertiser was not delivered to homes in the parish to the east of the A414 apparently due to the opinion that there was little revenue from house sales, businesses etc. in the village of Colney Heath.

Cllr. Mrs. Defoe proposed that the Parish Council write to the Herts. Advertiser asking them to reconsider the decision not to deliver the weekly paper to homes in the village of Colney Heath.

RESOLVED to write to the Herts. Advertiser pointing out that there was considerably more property movement in the village of Colney Heath than before and asking that the decision not to deliver to the village be reconsidered.

e) St. Mark's Church – Tree Work

Received a request from the Warden of St. Mark's Church for the Parish Council to consider an estimate from Oakapple Landscapes for the removal of trees from the closed churchyard.

The Clerk reported that the Warden had consulted the CDC Trees and Woodlands Officer and was awaiting two further quotes for the work.

RESOLVED to reconsider when further quotations were submitted.

5. FINANCE

a) Parish Council Accounts

Received copies of all emergency and current accounts, which had been circulated to all Cllrs. prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Chairman's action in authorising the signing, out of meeting, of all emergency cheques be confirmed and that cheques be drawn to cover all current accounts.

Cllrs. noted that an invoice had been received from A.T. Bone & Son for pitch maintenance work at the High Street Recreation Ground.

The Clerk reported that the company had advised that the final spraying stage be deferred until next Spring to maximise the effect and had therefore invoiced the Council for the total amount less £175 for spraying.

The Clerk had subsequently invoiced the Football Club for their proportion of the work completed (£375.09 being 87.74% of the total contribution) but the Club's Chairman had disputed the invoice and suggested that the Council pay their full 100% contribution while the Club pay the remaining £252.50.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council disagrees with the Club's suggestion which goes against the previous agreement. To inform the Club that the Parish Council would not accept anything less than 87.74% of the total invoice and that this sum of £375.09 be paid immediately.

b) Charity of Charles Morris for Allotments Accounts

Caroline Pluck, as Honorary Clerk to the Trustees, presented an up-to-date financial report.

6. PLANNING

a) Planning Applications

Received weekly lists of planning applications from St. Albans City & District Council.

Cllrs. considered the comments collated by the Planning Applications Officer as circulated since the last meeting.

5/97/1802 – Two storey side extension at 13 Roestock Gardens, Colney Heath

NO OBJECTIONS

5/97/1804CL – Certificate of lawfulness (existing) for use of annexe as ancillary residential accommodation at Roestock Cottage, Roestock Lane.

OBJECTIONS

1. There is no justification for an application for a certificate of lawfulness to use the old games room as an ancillary dwelling. There is an enforcement notice on this building, which is still active, and there is no legal permission to occupy the dwelling.
2. A granny annexe permission has been approved to add as an extension to the main building. This permission needs to be actioned.
3. This application constitutes a request to justify a new residential dwelling within the Green Belt. Unlike a similar situation this building has been enforced against within the four years.
4. It is inappropriate to make this request and there is no justification to make a request for a Certificate of Lawfulness or to assume it is existing.
5. The Parish Council recommends that this application be rejected.

5/97/1831LB/1832 – First floor side extension at The Grove, Roestock Lane.

OBJECTIONS

1. This application is to add two large bedrooms and an extra bathroom onto the northern end of this listed building by way of first floor additions.
2. The Parish Council concerns are that this will materially affect the character of the listed building both externally and internally, dependent on the level of historical features that will be affected.

6. PLANNING (CONT.)

3. It is important that extensions or additions to locally listed buildings are both in keeping with the existing preserved features and character and do not change, damage or materially affect those listed building features.
4. The size of the proposed extension is such that it will change the building quite significantly, changing the small farmhouse into a much larger longer building with a totally different character. Totally unrelated to those historic features that were deemed important enough to have listed.
5. The Parish Council would object to any proposal that would damage the historic importance, character and physical structures of this listed building.
6. The applicants have also recently replaced historic window frames with modern UPVC, which is inappropriate and damaging to the historic value as a listed building.

5/97/1833 – Loft conversion at 163 Colney Heath Lane **NO OBJECTIONS**

5/97/1885 – Variation of Condition 7 (restrictions on use of site) of planning permission 5/0203/86 at Unit 1, Homebase Store, Alban Park Estate, Hatfield Road.

NO OBJECTIONS but the Parish Council is concerned that the change in the wording of condition 7 was such that it allowed any new uses “not existing at present, but not on the list” to suddenly be introduced to the activities at Homebase. This would be unacceptable.

b) Appeals and Enforcement Notices

There was no notification of any appeals or enforcement notices issued since the last meeting.

c) Planning Decisions

The Clerk reported that no planning decisions had been received since the last meeting.

d) Planning Procedures

Cllrs. reviewed the new planning procedures introduced at the September meeting.

The Clerk reported that she was satisfied that the Parish Council’s comments were now being received in time by the CDC and appearing on the Plans South Agenda.

Cllr. Mrs. Nash felt that establishing a Planning Sub-committee would improve the Parish Council’s involvement in planning. Cllr. Crump agreed that he would prefer to have a Planning Sub-committee but felt that the new system was an improvement and was currently working very well.

RESOLVED to review planning procedures again at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

7. OPEN SPACES

a) Colney Heath Common

i) Common Ranger’s Report

Received the Common Ranger’s report for October.

It was noted that the Common boundary fence had now been erected on the area of Common land to the west of Church Lane. Cllr. Mrs. Nash felt that a Kissing Gate would be more appropriate at the far end of the footpath.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Brazier arrange for a wooden Kissing Gate to be installed from the Parish Paths Partnership money.

Cllrs. agreed that they did not wish the area of land to be enclosed along the riverbank or adjacent to Church Lane and that in time it would be preferable to establish a blackthorn hedge along the boundary and remove the fencing.

Cllrs. were very concerned about the lack of flow in the Colne.

7. OPEN SPACES (CONT.)

RESOLVED to convey the Parish Council's concerns to the EA and ask for their comments on the lack of flow in the Colne.

Cllrs. were concerned to learn that the well on the Common to the rear of no. 43 High Street had been covered in rubble.

RESOLVED that the Common Working Party investigates the well.

ii) Shell UK Land – west of Church Lane

The Clerk reported a conversation with the agents acting for Shell UK in the sale of the land adjacent to the Common to the west of Church Lane.

Shell were anxious to sell the land as two potential purchasers had recently withdrawn their offers due to planning constraints and poor quality of the land.

Cllrs. discussed the possibility of a 50% grant for restoration from the Millenium Greens fund but were aware of concerns regarding contamination of the land and future liabilities.

RESOLVED i) to ask the CDC for advice on the valuation of the land

ii) to pursue the EA for details of the composition of the landfill.

iii) Trees to rear of 41 High Street.

Received a request from the owner of no. 41 High Street that the Parish Council arranges for further work to be carried out on the willow trees on the Common to the rear of the property.

RESOLVED to ask the CDC Trees & Woodlands Officer to inspect the trees and advise the Council accordingly.

b) Recreational Areas

Cllrs. discussed outstanding items needing attention at the recreational areas.

Sleapshyde entrance and ramp and fencing of the play area and the Roestock & Boissy entrance gates were all items to be carried forward at the budget meeting for work to be undertaken in 1998/99.

c) High Street Recreation Ground

Received a further letter from Redland Aggregates confirming that they would be willing to transfer to the Council the freehold interest of a strip of land adjacent to the football pitches.

RESOLVED that Cllrs. ask Redlands for details of the composition of the land before agreeing to take over the freehold.

Cllrs. discussed the lease requirements for the Pavilion regarding the tenant's obligations for maintenance and the landlord's responsibility to carry out inspections of the premises.

The Clerk reported that Rumball Sedgwick would be prepared to carry out an Interim Schedule of Dilapidation which would involve a half day inspection and report for £300 plus VAT.

RESOLVED to obtain alternative quotations for inspection of the Pavilion.

d) Park Ranger's Report for October 1997

Received the Park Ranger's report for October giving details of the amount of times the playbark had been raked at each site.

e) Community Park

Received a letter from Groundwork Hertfordshire advising the Parish Council on management of the Community Park.

RESOLVED that the Recreational Areas Working Party and the Common Working Party organise a volunteer work force to carry out the recommended work at the park.

f) Highfield Trust

Cllr. Ellis reported on the recent meeting of the Highfield Trust.

7. OPEN SPACES (CONT.)

Received information from the District Council on road naming on the Highfield Estate.

Cllrs. discussed the naming of the main road through the Wilcon Estate and the CDC suggestion of "Princess Diana Drive".

Alternative suggestions had since been made – Esmond, Florey and Huxley – after demolished hospital wards.

Cllr. Crump proposed that the Council accept the name Huxley.

Cllr. Mrs. Lynch proposed that the Council accept the name "Princess Diana Drive"

Cllrs. voted on the naming of the road. Princess Diana Drive received four votes and Huxley received three votes.

RESOLVED to write to the CDC approving the suggestion "Princess Diana Drive" and suggesting that the names Esmond, Florey & Huxley be used for future road naming on the development.

g) Dudley Wood

The Chairman reported on the successful unveiling ceremony of the new name sign at Dudley Wood (formerly Whitehorse Lane Playing Field) on Sunday 9 November.

Received a request from Watling Chase Community Forest that the Parish Council considers adding Dudley Wood to the Forest Friends Partnership projects list.

RESOLVED that the Council agrees in principle to Dudley Wood being added to the Forest Friends Partnership projects list.

Received details of the unveiling of the Bullens Green Community Woodland sign on 5/12/97 at 2 p.m.

h) Sleapshyde Pond

Received a report from a concerned resident about resprouting Elms around Sleapshyde Pond and a suggestion that advice be obtained on how best to manage them.

RESOLVED to contact the CDC Trees & Woodlands Officer for advice on how to manage the Elms.

8. HIGHWAYS

a) Public Transport

Passenger Transport Update for November 1997

b) Smallford Trail

There was no report on items relating to the Smallford Trail.

c) Footpaths & Bridleways

Received a copy of a letter from a concerned resident about the Diversion Order for Bridleway 6 Ridge.

RESOLVED to ask HCC for progress on the order and draw attention to the bad state of the site.

9. COUNCIL OWNED (OR TRUSTEE) BUILDINGS

a) Village Hall

Received Cllr. Brazier's report on the recent meeting of the Village Hall Council.

Received a letter from the Village Hall Advisory Service advising the Parish Council and Village Hall Council on how to proceed with the next stage of the Millennium Grant application.

b) Charles Morris Hall

Cllr. Ellis reported on matters relating to the Charles Morris Hall.

The Clerk reported on a matter concerning the contract for the new post and rail fence at the front of the hall.

9. COUNCIL OWNED (OR TRUSTEE) BUILDINGS (CONT.)

The quotation for £696, which the Council had accepted, did not include painting of the new fence and repainting the existing vehicle and pedestrian gates, despite the original specification requested.

RESOLVED to inform the contractor of his obligation to fulfil his quotation request otherwise the Parish Council would be forced to seek alternative quotations for the job.

10. OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

a) CBTA

Cllr. Brazier's report on the recent meeting.

b) HALC

Information Sheet no. 6 – October 1996

c) Hertfordshire County Council

Public Consultation on Proposed Modifications to Draft County Structure Plan.

Environment Magazine – September 1997

d) Herts. & Middx. Wildlife Trust

Local Biodiversity Action Plan

e) NALC

Local Councils and VAT

f) Open Spaces Society

Open Space Magazine – Autumn 1997

g) St. Albans Community Forest Association

Newsletter no. 18

Forthcoming Events – winter 1997

h) St. Albans District Association of Parish Councils

Agenda for meeting on 28/10/97.

Minutes of meeting on 17/6/97.

The Cllrs. were concerned that Colney Heath had not been represented at the last two meetings.

RESOLVED to ask the PC representative to inform the Clerk if he was unable to attend future meetings in order that a replacement could be found.

i) St. Albans City & District Council

Millennium Events in the City & District of St. Albans – request for details of parish events.

St. Albans & District Business Forum – 27/11/97.

j) Three Valleys Water

Coping with the Demand for Water – Seminar on 24/11/97.

11. STAFF

Received details from the NALC/SLCC of the revision in Clerks' salary scales to take account of the additional duties and responsibilities arising from the Account and Audit Regulations 1996.

The Council considered the recommendation that the Clerk be moved from Spinal Point 25 to Spinal Point 27 with effect from 1 April 1997.

RESOLVED to defer the item to the budget meeting on 26/11/97

12. ST. ALBANS CITY & DISTRICT COUNCIL

8/10/97 Planning & Heritage Committee

20/10/97 Planning S/C South

28/10/97 Road Safety Advisory Committee

4/11/97 Parish Liaison Joint Committee

5/11/97 Health S/C

13. URGENT BUSINESS

No items of urgent business had been received.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.40 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

DATE