

# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at

The Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne on Monday 21st March 2017 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr Bond, Cllr Paxton, Cllr Siggers, Cllr Taylor (Chairman), Cllr Tanous

Also Present: Clerk D Williams, Braintree District Council (BDC) Cllr Siddall, BDC Cllr Spray and 7 members of the public.

**911. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllr Brace, Cllr Woolmore

**912. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – None

**913. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING** – The minutes of the last parish council meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 which had been previously circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**914. MATTERS ARISING** - None

## PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

The meeting was suspended for public questions and statements.

- (i). I have had an allotment taken away for a sensory garden, so will more allotments be taken away?
  - (ii). I am dismayed with the removal of three allotments to incorporate them into the Meadows. The water tank has to be moved and new fencing has to be installed. Both the Village Design Statement and BDC Open Spaces Plan show this area as allotments. We should have been consulted. DEFRA rules should be followed.
  - (iii). There has been more damage done to the high pavement on Colneford Hill. Should we take a more pro active approach and should there be a sub committee?
  - (iv). There is more damage to the top of the village green, there are more cars being parked down the side and the top of the village green and there is no space for through heavy traffic.
- The meeting was resumed.

## 915. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Cllr Taylor said that the issues raised will be discussed later in the meeting.

## 916. REPORT FROM BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

BDC Cllr Spray said that BDC had approved the budget and council tax has been increased for the first time for 4 years. The draft local plan is going before the full council in the autumn before being submitted to the inspector next spring. BDC has had a Police presentation regarding the increasing drug problem including the influx of gangs from elsewhere.

## 917. PLANNING MATTERS (a) Applications

17/00245/LBC 24 Colneford Hill - Removal of gas imitation burner, replacement with log burner and new chimney liner – no comment.

17/00455/FUL Morelands Farm, Bures Road - Retention of garage and garden store - We object to this development as:-  
1. It is outside the village envelope; 2. The White Colne Village Design Statement, page 33 item 6.4 states that all developments should be contained in the village envelope; 3. The village survey in February 2016 said that the majority response was for no development outside the village envelope.

(b) Advice of Planning Applications approved by Braintree District Council (BDC)

16/02032/COUPA Tymbar Weir Farm Wakes Colne Road - Prior Approval of Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) and for Associated Operational Development - Change of use of an agricultural barn Tymbar Weir Farm to a dwelling house.

(c) Advice of Planning Applications refused by BDC

16/01352/FUL Land At Chalkney Meadows Colchester Road - Change of use of land to form seasonal wedding venue (1 May to 30 September inclusive) including erection of three linked Tipi

(d) Cllr Taylor said that the situation regarding the containers on the land at Colne Park Road cannot be reviewed at present as there is no report, and this will be on the agenda for the meeting in May. She said that the owner of the land had approached the parish council advising that he was considering a proposal to develop some of the land and give some to the parish council as amenity land. Cllr Bond said that he should go through the usual pre application process via BDC, and all members agreed to this.

(e) Cllr Taylor said that a parishioner had advised that the fishing lodge on the old pits near the lake at Chalkney Mill Lane had been lived in all winter. Members agreed that the clerk should advise the enforcement officer at BDC.

## 918. CONSIDERATION OF A REPORT ON THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT FOR THE TRANSFER OF WCPC LAND TO ESSEX CC IN RETURN FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE VILLAGE HALL AND LAND TO WCPC.

Cllr Taylor referred to the sale of the land behind the village hall and said that Essex County Council (ECC) advise that they have not yet seen the deeds relating to the parish council land. An electronic copy has been sent, and members agreed to instruct Messrs Ellisons Solicitors to send the deeds of the Meadows to the solicitors acting on the parish council's behalf being Messrs Holmes and Hills at Braintree. The clerk was asked to attend to this. Members also agreed that Messrs Ellisons should release any other documents that they hold for the parish council, and the clerk was asked to write to them asking if they hold any other documents.

## 919. OPEN SPACES ACTION PLAN

Cllr Taylor said that additions for White Colne Meadows are:- the new fencing for the allotments; the renovation of the community orchard to include drainage; a sensory garden; any costs to return allotments to open spaces. The comment that BDC has not seen the deeds of White Colne Meadows should be removed. The clerk was asked to amend the Action Plan with BDC.

## 920. COMMUNITY LIAISON

Members agreed to renew the appointment of ROSPA to undertake the play area inspections in May at a cost of £133+VAT. Members agreed to renew the Street Cleaning Agreement with BDC for 2016/2017 and invoice BDC with £891.05. The clerk was asked to advise BDC that there is a problem with the leaf fall sweep as ECC Highways are not repairing the pavement on Colneford Hill, and to ask BDC if they are able to help.

Cllr Taylor said that the recent wine tasting event at the Village Hall was a success.

Cllr Bond said that the VET (Village Emergency Telephone System) scheme in conjunction with the defibrillator is still being considered as there is only 1 volunteer from the village at present. There are offers from people outside White Colne, and he will continue to seek volunteers.

Cllr Taylor said that Next Door is a social network replacing Street Life, and suggested that members looked at it.

## 921. WHITE COLNE MEADOWS

Cllr Paxton said that two quotations have been received for the drainage of the pond, and a third quote is awaited to send to BDC for Section 106 funding.

Cllr Taylor said that there have been problems with dogs off leads having aggressive behaviour and attacking other dogs. The clerk was asked to write to the dog warden advising of this and that our signage is faded and ask if it can be renewed, and whether there is further signage that would help with the issues that we have.

## 922. ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Bond said that all 4 allotment plot vacancies have now been taken, with 1 parishioner on the waiting list. The sensory garden was only suggested to tidy up the area and use an unused area. Cllr Taylor said that it is not our policy to take away allotment plots from plot holders. Cllr Bond proposed that the parish council consults with those who feel aggrieved, agree which plots they want, and then tidy up the vacant plots and try to let them. When appropriate the handyman can be asked to tidy up the plots. Members agreed to this.

The clerk advised that there has been no response to the request resent to Four Colnes Horticultural Society for their support towards a replacement fence around the allotments. 3 members of the public left the meeting.

## 922. VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Tanous said that there is a reduced level of bookings. Some radiators have been relocated, and further plumbing work has been done. The hedge has been cut at the side of the village hall. There has been no application yet for the vacancy of caretaker.

Cllr Bond said that we recognise that the village hall is a community asset and so a lot of money has been spent on the hall.

Cllr Paxton said that we do need to improve marketing, we have had some guidance, and there are a lot of health and safety issues that need concentrating on.

Cllr Bond said that photographs of the village hall need to be on the web site.

Cllr Taylor referred to the ECC grant of £350 under the Community WiFi scheme which has been agreed in principle. She said that County Broadband consider that the village hall requires a 20 foot aerial on the roof to obtain their service. BT have an offer of £29.99 each month for Infinity 1 broadband service. The clerk was asked to write to ECC and enquire whether the £350 grant can be paid direct to the parish council to fund the BT broadband service.

Cllr Taylor advised that the clerk has agreed to take over the role as Hon Treasurer to the Village Hall from the start of the new financial year on 1 April. Mr Peter Norris was thanked for his considerable work as Hon Treasurer over many years.

## 923. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a).The clerk reported that since the last meeting, the following payments are to be made. These were authorised :-

Cheque	Payee Details	Amount £	VAT incl
1704	J J Bond –handyman for Meadows clearance £37.50,football fence clear£80	£ 117.50	
1705	Braintree District Council – copying charges for planning applications	£ 29.06	
1706	Leo Print - January newsletter	£ 101.14	
1707	Leo Print - March newsletter	£ 101.14	
1708	D Williams-clerk sal Feb/Mar £556.22,ink,post exp £114.67,office use £52	£ 722.89	£ 10.99
1709	H M Revenue & Customs – PAYE for clerk salary Feb	£ 184.80	
1710	Mortimer Contracts Ltd – grasscuts,Meadows £63,V Hall £34,V Green £64	£ 193.20	£ 32.20
1711	J Taylor – expenses for village Carols event Dec	£ 80.00	
1712	E & J Fire and Security - fire inspection v hall	£ 103.96	£ 17.33
1713	S Beck Plumbing& Heating Ltd – radiator & plumbing work to v hall	£ 569.34	£ 94.89
1714	St Andrews Church – donation re churchyard grasscuts	£ 600.00	
1715	Braintree District Council – copying charges for planning application	£ 2.89	
1716	H M Revenue & Customs-PAYE for clerk salary Mar	£ 184.80	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall chargeback - electricity	£ 14.00	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall chargeback gas	£ 39.00	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall chargeback - electricity	£ 14.00	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall chargeback gas	£ 39.00	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£ 3,096.72	

(b). Funds Received

Since the last financial report, the following funds have been received:-

Nat West Bank – interest	£ 0.17
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 0.17

(c). Financial statement & Bank Reconciliation

Following the above transactions there is a credit balance on current account of	£ 2,699.12
on reserve account of	£10,199.39
Total	£12,898.51

Of which the balance held in reserve - Heritage Fund	£ Nil
And the balance held in reserve - Village Hall maintenance & works is	£ Nil
Total of allocated funds is	£ Nil
Thus the balance of unallocated funds is	£12,898.51

Bank Balances 16.01.17	£ 15,995.06
Add Receipts	£ 0.17
Sub Total	£ 15,995.23
Less Total Payments	£ 3,096.72
Bank Balances 21.03.17	£ 12,898.51

- (d) The Village Hall account has a bank balance of £3,320.70 credit, and less liabilities the position is £2,039.34 credit.
- (e) Cllr Bond asked if the electronic banking arrangements have been completed, and the clerk advised that he will deal with this.
- (f) The annual review of Standing Orders of the parish council was conducted and agreed.
- (g). The annual review of the Financial Regulations of the parish council was conducted and agreed.
- (h).The annual review of the Risk Assessment of the parish council was conducted and agreed. Amendments were agreed being:- with the exception of the Village Hall account there are no petty cash transactions, and the Village Hall accounts are included in the parish council accounts including for VAT purposes. The clerk was also asked to write to Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) asking for details of the bank of temporary clerks in the event of losing the clerk, which is regarded as a medium risk.
- (i). The appointment of the internal auditor is reviewed on an annual basis, and members agreed to ask Ms N Powell Davies to undertake the internal audit for the parish council again this year.
- (j) The clerk advised that the BDC council tax demand for the village hall shows a nil figure after discretionary relief.
- (k) Cllr Bond said that public liability insurance is required for the bee keeping on the allotments and the clerk was asked to write to the plot holder for this as the policy shown does not have this cover.

**924. PARISH REVIEW, ALSO KNOWN AS COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Members considered and completed this review covering the structure of the parish council, which can be returned to BDC.

**925. HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Bond referred to the reintroduction of the Speedwatch campaign and said that 2 further volunteers can be added to the 4 people who have already expressed an interest, and the campaign may be able to start in the autumn.

Cllr Taylor said that she met with ECC Parish Paths Partnership Officer and our parish footpath representative to understand what footpaths the ECC will deal with. ECC advised that ECC only cut those for which they receive complaints. Cllr Taylor said that the parish can walk the paths this year and can then decide which paths require cutting and can then review with ECC the costs involved and the support that ECC will give.

Cllr Taylor said that the blockage of the new footpath 26 has been referred to the Public Rights of Way Inspector who has advised that the parish council will have to put a hand rail and steps at the Colne Park Road end of this footpath as it is considered dangerous and therefore he will not pursue the unblocking of the footpath until the PC had completed this work at our expense as we had asked for the footpath in the first place. Members agreed to reply and state that the footpath was proposed by parishioners, we do not consider it our responsibility and ask him to arrange for the footpath to be unblocked. The clerk was asked to reply and also to write to the Flitch Rangers, advise them of the situation and ask if they can assist us with this problem.

Cllr Paxton said that there is a water leak on Colchester Road, and he will contact Anglian Water.

Cllr Bond said that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) is back in operation as the battery has been changed.

Cllr Bond said that there has been further damage to Colneford Hill pavement and the vehicle has been traced. It was agreed that ECC Highways are to be asked to consider installing a no right turn sign from the Colchester direction going up Colne Park Road for lorries over a certain size, in the absence of any progress in the agreed road reconfiguration at the bottom of the village green. The meeting was suspended and BDC Cllr Siddall said that there is no progress with the repair of the footway (pavement) on Colneford Hill, uphill from Colneford House to the bend in the road as ECC Highways say that the footway is not considered dangerous. The meeting resumed.

**926. ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING**

Cllr Taylor suggested Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April as the previous week was Easter Tuesday. Members agreed.

**927. OTHER MATTERS**

Cllr Taylor thanked Lyn Brown for editing the March newsletter and said that Peter Norris had agreed to continue as editor. We need to find a deputy editor. Cllr Taylor said that she could not find formal ownership of the war memorial and this is required to claim a grant to repair it. We hope that the Parochial Church Council will claim ownership as it is situated in the churchyard and will assist them in applying for the appropriate grant.

There being no further business the parish council meeting was closed at 9.45 pm.

Chairperson..... Date.....