

WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at

The Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne on Tuesday 28th January 2020 at 7.30pm.

Present :Cllr Batchford, Cllr Bolton, Cllr Bond (Chairman), Cllr Paxton, Cllr Saggars, Cllr Watt.

Also Present: Clerk D Williams, Braintree District Council (BDC) Cllr Spray, and 3 members of the public.

206. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Taylor, Essex County Council (ECC) Cllr Beavis, BDC Cllr Courtauld.

207. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - None

208. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last parish council meeting of 19th November 2019 which had been previously circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

209. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE

Cllr Paxton said that the light at the side of the door need a new bulb. Cllr Bond said that he would arrange for the handyman to action this.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

The meeting was suspended for public questions and statements.

A parishioner referred to the planning application 20/00103/FUL for Colne Commercials. He said that he lived next door to the property. He said that the fence is not 1 metre from the highway as stated, but less than 500 centimetres. Vehicles now pull out from his property onto the road with visibility reduced to zero because of the fence, and there have been many near misses. The speed limit is exceeded with some vehicles reaching 100 mph. The fence is in breach of conditions imposed when the site was revamped. The owners state that they have security fencing as they have had £100,000 damage in the past. We have never had police contact regarding any damage. The fence is an eyesore. There is also excessive lighting at the site, this must be a distraction to vehicles on the road, and we have light pollution on our grade two listed property. In addition they have not landscaped the site and the intruder alarm keeps going off.

The meeting was resumed.

210. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS RAISED AT PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS.

Cllr Bond said that the planning application referred to will be considered in the meeting,

211. REPORT FROM BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

BDC Cllr Spray said that the planning inspector is considering further information provided regarding the draft local plan, and a decision is expected by the end of March. BDC Cllr Spray referred to the planning application for Colne Commercials and said that she has been to see the site and that it is difficult to drive out of the neighbouring property.

212. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Applications

20/00049/ELD Brookfield Stables, Wakes Green Road – Application for a lawful development certificate for an existing use – occupation of two static homes as a residence for over 4 years – No comment

20/00086/AGR Church Farm, Bures Road – Application for prior notification of agricultural or forestry development – erection of steel frame agricultural building – Noted, no response requested.

20/00106/COUPA Little Catleys Farm, Catley Road – prior approval for the change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house (Class C3), and for associated operational development – change of use to 1no. residential dwelling – No Comment

20/00103/FUL Colne Commercials, 136 Colchester Road – retention of 1.9m high coloured steel mesh security fencing and gate to site frontage – After discussion the agreed response is:- The parish council objects to this application on the basis that this goes against the conditions of Planning Applications 95/00553 and 12/10613 which were specific about layout and potential obstruction of sight lines. Those planning conditions were included for very good reasons. Referring to planning application 12/10613 the condition 6 specifically stated that prior approval had to be obtained before any installation. There is evidence available that 74% of vehicles exceed the speed limit on this road and there is a significant increase in accident risk as a result of loss of sight lines. In addition the nature of the fencing has had a negative impact on the visual amenity of the area. The parish council has serious concerns about other matters relating to the site which have been referred to the Braintree District Council Planning Department.

The clerk was asked to send the following comments to Planning Department at BDC regarding Colne Commercials:-We refer to the current planning application 20/00103/FUL for the above address, and comments have been submitted separately. The parish council has concerns regarding significant increases in security lighting, the installation of an illuminated fascia sign and the removal of vegetation that screens the site, all of which significantly impacts on the visual amenity of the area.

2 members of public left the meeting.

213. 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 WCP

Cllr Bond said that this matter had started 34 years ago. He said that our agent had asked the proposed purchaser for a bond to secure the construction of the entrance road to the proposed building development at the start of the works. The purchaser does not want to provide a bond as the road will be developed at the start and then top dressed. Our agent still recommends a bond. ECC state that if this matter is not resolved in 28 days then they will grant the parish council a lease to the village hall. Our agent suggests a meeting and members agreed. Cllr Bond said that Cllr Taylor had recently met Essex County Council (ECC) Cllr Beavis and she said that we wish to keep the village hall and to ensure best arrangements. ECC Cllr Beavis is to arrange a meeting with the ECC cabinet member.

214. COMMUNITY LIAISON

Cllr Bond said that no quotation had been received for the memorial bench on the village green. One quotation has been received for a concrete base and installation, and Cllr Saggars said that he would provide a name for a second quote.

215. WHITE COLNE MEADOWS

Cllr Bond said that gullies are blocked on Colne Park Road, but ECC say that they are not a priority.

Cllr Bond said that the hedge opposite Bridge House on Colneford Hill is creeping towards the road and it needs trimming back by 1 ½ metres. The clerk was asked to obtain a quotation from Mortimers and then refer back.

216. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Payments. The clerk reported that since the last meeting, the following payments had been or are to be made:-
From Nat West account:-

<u>Cheque</u>	<u>Payee Details</u>	<u>Amount £</u>	<u>VAT inc</u>
D/D	GoCardless Ltd – County Broadband WiFi at hall monthly charge 2x£29	£ 58.00	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall electricity 2x£20	£ 40.00	
D/D	Scottish Power – village hall gas 2x £78.00	£ 156.00	
D/D	Anglian Water – village hall water	£ 166.75	
TOTAL NAT WEST PAYMENTS		£ 420.75	

By electronic payments from Unity Bank account:-

B Mapes – handyman September & November PAID	£ 75.00	
B Mapes – caretaker April – November PAID	£ 610.00	
J Heathcote – hall cleaning - November PAID	£ 75.00	
J Heathcote – hall cleaning materials – November PAID	£ 45.02	
G Allen – hall window cleaning - 25 November PAID	£ 14.00	
S Mason – booking secretary November PAID	£ 52.00	
S Mason – cleaning materials November PAID	£ 5.46	
Unity Bank charges PAID	£ 18.00	
Stuart Day Electrical Installations Ltd – hall electrical outside light & box	£ 198.00	£ 33.00
D Williams-clerk sal Dec/Jan £972.66 less PAYE £ 388.80	£ 583.86	
H M Revenue & Customs – PAYE for clerk salary January	£ 194.40	
G Allen – hall window cleaning 8 January	£ 14.00	
J Heathcote – hall cleaning December	£ 100.00	
S Mason – booking secretary December	£ 93.00	
H M Revenue & Customs – PAYE for clerk salary February	£ 194.40	
TOTAL UNITY BANK PAYMENTS	£ 2,272.14	

Funds Received Since the last report, the following funds have been or will be received into Nat West :-

Village hall occasional hire fees	£ 209.00
Allotment rentals	£ 45.00
TOTAL NAT WEST RECEIPTS	£ 254.00

Into Unity Bank

Village hall regular hire fees	£ 1,201.50
TOTAL UNITY BANK RECEIPTS	£ 1,201.50

(b) Financial statement & Bank Reconciliation

Following the above transactions- There is a credit balance on Nat West current a/c of £ 3,187.23

There is a credit balance on Unity Bank account of £27,862.94

TOTAL BANK BALANCES £ 31,050.17

Balance held in reserve – Village projects from White Colne 50 Club £ 3,165.73

Balance held in reserve - Village Hall Roofing Fund is £7,000.00

Total of allocated funds is £ 10,165.73

Thus the balance of unallocated funds is £ 20,884.44

NAT WEST BANK

Bank Balances 19.11.19	£ 3,353.98
Add Receipts	£ 254.00
Sub Total	£ 3,607.98
Less Total Payments	£ 420.75
Bank Balances 28.01.20	£ 3,187.23

UNITY BANK

Bank Balances 19.11.19	£ 28,933.58
Add Receipts	£ 1,201.50
Sub Total	£ 30,135.08
Less Total Payments	£ 2,272.14
Bank Balances 28.01.20	£ 27,862.94

(c) The budget for the financial year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was discussed and draft figures were considered in detail. These now include village hall income and expenditure. Income figures agreed included £302 for allotment rentals, nil for newsletter adverts and £9,500 for village hall hires. The parish support grant is increased slightly from £111 to £151. Total income excluding the precept is estimated at £11,070. Total expenditure is estimated at £22,930 and included Meadows maintenance of £1,100, grass cutting of £1,750 and village hall costs of £6,530.

Cllr Bond proposed that the precept is increased to £12,026 which is an increase of £687. This is an increase of 2% in the council tax for each band D property charge from £55.14 to £56.24. Cllr Saggars proposed a nil increase in the band D property charge, and Cllr Paxton proposed an increase of 3%. Neither proposal was seconded and 4 members voted for a 2 % increase. The precept of £12,026 and the budget was therefore confirmed in writing to BDC by the chairman and the clerk.

(d) The clerk's annual salary was reviewed, and it was agreed to increase the salary by the amount of the national award to be advised by Essex Association of Local Councils, expected to be 2% so that the new figure is expected to be £5,952, which is top of the scale for the job in view of his years of service.

(e) Members agreed the increase of £1 per cut to the grass cutting prices requested by the contractor for 2020.

217. VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Paxton said that the booking secretary is happy that hall bookings continue at a good rate.

Cllr Paxton wondered whether a welcome pack should be provided for new residents in the village, and he agreed to prepare a draft for consideration.

Cllr Bond said that the hall committee should consider a hall safety review which should include the current hirers agreement and disclaimers.

Cllr Bond said that members should consider whether parking restrictions should be imposed at the hall entrance. He said that he is trying to look at the solar lamp post in considering the repair or replacement.

Members agreed the quotation of £113.66 for public liability insurance of £5m for the booking secretary.

218. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Bond said that the parish council have rejected the ECC plan to widen Colneford Hill by using part of the village green, and then putting hatching on the wall side of Colneford Hill. He said that he had been advised that the original scheme was still in the ECC Highways budget and that the land ownership issues have been sorted out. ECC Cllr Beavis is to investigate this with ECC Highways.

Cllr Bond referred to the meeting with other local parish councils to discuss a request for an average speed camera on A1124.

Chappel, Wakes Colne, Aldham and Eight Ash Green Parish Councils all attended the meeting and agreed that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) is loaned to each parish council for two weeks so that additional data can be included in the application for an average speed camera, and then the information can be collated. All the parishes have provided details of locations for the SID which can therefore start at Chappel and Wakes Colne once it has collected sufficient data at Bures Road.

Cllr Bond said that Essex Police were conducting speed checks last Sunday at Colneford Hill.

Cllr Bond said that the solar film screening previously agreed will be applied to the telephone box which houses the defibrillator when the weather becomes warmer.

219. TREE SURVEY

Cllr Bond said that two quotations for the work proposed under medium risk in the recent tree survey had been received, and the clerk was asked to clarify the lower quote with the contractor and proceed if there is no alteration to the amount.

220. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Members were advised that 6 bags of rubbish were gathered from a recent litter pick.

There being no further business the parish council meeting was closed at 9.16 pm.

Chairman..... Date.....