

COLESHILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

of meeting held on Monday 21st October 2013, in the Village Hall

Present

Parish Councillors:	Terence Prideaux (TPx) (Chairman)	Dick Ware (DW)
	Carol Hallchurch (CH)	Elaine West (EW) (RFO)
	Dave McGhee (DM)	Lynn Woodgate (LW)
County Councillor:	Tim Butcher	
Parish Clerk:	Linda Collison (LC) (Clerk)	
Members of Public:	6	

There were no declarations of interest.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received prior to the meeting from District Councillor Graham Harris.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

It was MOVED by TPx and RESOLVED unanimously that the minutes of the Full Council meetings held on 16th September 2013 be signed as a true record of the meeting.

3. County Councillor's Report – Councillor Tim Butcher

2014-15 budget: Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) is continuing to look at the budget and an increase in the 2014-15 council tax seems unavoidable. BCC have launched a Budget Consultation Survey where residents are being asked for their opinion on how the budget should be apportioned and their recommended percentage increase in (County) Council Tax.

Barrack Hill Triangle: Councillor Butcher reported that he had met with TPx, DM and the Local Area Technician to consider options for repairing the Barrack Triangle. Councillor Butcher said that he is determined to ensure this matter is addressed and offered £1,000 from his Community Leadership Fund towards the cost of this repair – advising that the Parish Council might have to consider a contribution of its own if the total cost exceeded that figure.

4. District Councillor's Report

Gypsies and Travellers Public Consultation: (2nd September to 14th October 2013). TPx reported that the documents for this consultation had been posted to the previous Clerk's address and as a result CPC did not respond within the given time frame. However, upon request, Chiltern District Council (CDC) Planning granted CPC an extension to respond. DW explained that in June 2011 temporary planning permission (until June 2016) had been granted for the area to be a small (single) gypsy site. The resident's family health and welfare at the time outweighed any potential harm to the green belt.

It was agreed that although such sites are not appropriate within the Green Belt, the provision of a second pitch on the existing site is unlikely to cause significant additional public detriment, given the existing screening around, however this second site should be subject to the same restrictions as the existing one. Action DW/Clerk to respond.

TPx confirmed that CDC now had the correct address and email address for communicating with the Council.

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5. Correspondence

A member of the public has raised concerns regarding the two large willow trees adjacent to his house asking that the trees are reduced in size or pollarded.

TPx had taken advice guidance from Pete Whipp of Ridgeway Woodlands who suggested that damage to the house from the trees is unlikely.

6. Chairman's remarks

Open Forum: TPx proposed the introduction of an open forum to be held for 15 minutes immediately before each Council meeting, giving members of the public the opportunity to raise matters with the Council without having to wait until the end of the meeting. The Chairman and Clerk to attend the forums and the members should attend whenever possible. The forum would not be formally minuted.

It was AGREED to introduce the open forum for a trial at the December meeting, and then to start it formally in January 2014. The forum should be advertised by the Council website, the village email service (see agenda item 10) and the village newsletter. CH said that it should be made clear to the public that matters raised in the forum could not be discussed at the meeting directly after the forum (unless the subject was already on the agenda) but would have to be deferred until the subsequent meeting.

Hall booking fees: TPx referred to correspondence from 1982 and 1992, (copies circulated prior to the meeting) where it clearly shows that a Gentlemen's agreement exists between the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council that accords the Parish Council free use of the small hall for six parish meetings per year.

DW (also Chairman of the Village Hall) agreed to take this matter back to the Village Hall Committee and then make a formal response to the Council.

7. Finance

- EW reported that the audit for the year ended 31 March 2013 had been completed and, apart from the weaknesses previously identified by the internal auditor, the only findings by the External Auditor were late submission and the omission of the Council's name in two places on the Annual Return Form.
- EW proposed, DW seconded and it was unanimously agreed to accept the 2012-13 Audited Annual Return and to implement the following recommendations :
 - Submit future Annual Returns on time, with forms completed in full.
 - Internal Auditor weaknesses to be addressed as follows:
 - The Financial Regulations will be reviewed, revised if necessary and proposed for adoption at the next full council meeting. (Action EW, TPx and LC)
 - A new Risk Assessment Document and Calendar of Actions to be set up and proposed for adoption at the next full council meeting. (Action EW, TPx and LC)
 - A 2014-15 budget to be prepared and adopted at the December Council meeting - before the 2014-15 precept amount is agreed and requested. Action EW.
 - The Asset Register to be updated as necessary and proposed for adoption at the next full council meeting. (Action EW, TPx and LC)

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- EW confirmed that Bank Reconciliations are now being made monthly and reported to Council.
- It was noted that although there were no recommendations regarding the book-keeping, EW had made several improvements to the cashbook, which was now being emailed monthly to TPx and LC.
- It was agreed that the 'Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and Right to Inspect the Annual Return form' should be displayed on the village notice board with Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Annual Return from Tuesday 22nd October 2013 for 14 days. Copies of the Annual Return would be provided free by email or at a charge of £2 for paper copies.
- It was unanimously agreed to appoint Arrow Accounting as **internal auditor** for 2013-14, terms according to their letter of Engagement dated 26th September 2013.
- It was unanimously agreed that **donations** should be a single item on the budget, and that the payment of donations should be made according to specific criteria and guidelines to be determined by Council.
- The **2013-14 accounts** were presented, including the bank reconciliation, the bank statement and summary of income and expenditure year to date.

It was noted that at 30th September 2013 :

- Bank Balance was £12,662.54,
- Spend Apr-Sept was £3,906.79 and
- Receipts Apr-Sept was £8,047.23 (£8,000 = precept)

EW confirmed that this information would be presented at each Council meeting adding that anyone wishing to see more detail should contact her.

- The Council thanked Councillor West for her hard work with the Council finances.

8. Approval of items for payment:

The following payments were approved for payment:

Description	Payee	Power	Amount (Total)
Annual Audit	Mazars	LGA 1972 S111	£120.00
Printing Newsletter (July)	CDC	LGA 1972 S111	£122.10
Printing Newsletter (Oct)	CDC	LGA 1972 S111	£113.87
Hedge Cutting	D Hall	OSA 1906 S14	£150.00
Web (6 months hosting)	1&1/D Higgins	LGA 1972 S111	£35.93
Clerks Wages (&PAYE)			Deferred to next month

It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate paying the web charges directly to the hosting company (1and1).

9. Planning

DW reported updates on two planning applications:

- **Longfield (CH/2013/1363/FA)**. Single storey front extension with accommodation in roof space and rear and side dormer windows. This application was now approved by CDC.
- **Windmill House (CH/2013/1437/FA)**. Part single storey, part two storey side extension and fenestration alterations. CDC is still deliberating.

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There was one new application:

- **Land Opposite Friars Vane Barrack Hill (CH/2013/1658/KA).** Felling of a horse chestnut and a cedar within a Conservation Area. Action CH and DW.

CH advised Council that she and DW are planning to meet with CDC Planning department to look at improve processes and communication.

Enforcements - CH reported that the owners of Oak Tree Cottage had been asked by the enforcement department at CDC for an application for retrospective planning permission on the basement. Currently that application has been delayed because CDC requires further information before the process can continue.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) It was proposed by DW, seconded by DM and agreed unanimously under Local Government Act 1972 section 101, to delegate the application for TPOs in the village to the Clerk, provided that they are requested by a member of the Parish Council, that all members of the Council are notified of their application and that they are reported in full at the following Council meeting.

10. Village Email Service

DM explained that the Village Email Service was in place, with the Clerk forwarding emails to the Webmaster (Derek Higgins) who in turn was forwarding to residents who had subscribed to the service. DM recommended that the Clerk should email directly to the subscribers and take over the management of email subscribers.

LC confirmed that the process adhered to Data Protection Act 1998 as subscribers' details were only being used for this service; were not being made public and the email bcc option was being used keeping the email addresses hidden from the other subscribers.

LC explained that it was difficult to know which emails should be forwarded to the email-list. EW requested that the CPC members were all bcc'd on the emails being issued.

It was proposed by DM and agreed unanimously that the Clerk manages the whole process (adding new subscribers to the email-list and issuing the emails. (Action LC)

11. The Village

- **The Triangle.** See item 3 above.
- **The War Memorial.** TPx had reminded the meeting of an initial estimate of £1,300 obtained some two years ago for cleaning the War Memorial. It was unanimously agreed that the War Memorial should be cleaned - the Clerk was asked to obtain 3 quotes.
- **Common and Pond.** TPx reported that Tony Barber and a contractor had surveyed the Common identifying hedges that needed cutting. Chris Wege explained that the front of the pond needed clearing and the irises growing in the pond needed removing to allow other vegetation to grow. He added that generally work on the Common and Pond should now wait for the Management Plan to be completed, but these tasks needed to be addressed as soon as possible. Mr Wege advised that a digger would be needed to clear the pond and added that a village resident had kindly offered to drive it without charge.

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It was unanimously agreed to spend up to £300 for the cost of hiring of a digger and any relevant insurance.

12. Meetings

TPx confirmed that a letter had been sent in support of a new **post office** at Broadways News, Old Amersham and that he had attended the appeal meeting on 24th September 2013, which was well attended with about six Coleshill residents present. However the Post Office announced that they will not approve a new post office until they themselves identify the need for one.

The owners of Broadways News have sent an email thanking CPC for their support and said they would advise when a decision was made.

TPx reported that he will be attending the **Ground Care Depot Open Day** at Amersham Town Council on 25th October 2013 – one of the subjects included was play area inspections.

13. Councillors' Reports

- **Open Spaces.** DM reported that many paths on the common had been cleared.
- **Website.** LC confirmed that one resident had displayed an interest in becoming the back-up web-master.
DM proposed, and it was unanimously agreed, that the Clerk be responsible for posting Council items onto the web site. (Action LC)
- **Cricket Club.** TPx reported that Henry Amar will be writing to the Council in time for the December meeting regarding funding needed to support the Cricket Club.
- **Tennis.** Nothing to report.
- **Village Hall.** The computer club continues to hold classes on a Monday morning – now at a reduced rate £2 per session.
- **School.** Nothing to report
- **Play Area.** Following a meeting between LW and a representative from Safe and Sound Playgrounds¹ a quote for £ 4,475 to make the repairs had been received. Concern was raised at the price. LW reminded members that the play area inspection had not identified any major issues and that not all of the repairs needed to be addressed immediately. The Clerk to obtain two further quotes. TPx said that he would ask for advice at the Ground Care Depot Open Day

The **Play Area Survey** results so far were inconclusive, although it has been suggested that the play area would probably be used more if it were better signed. (LC to investigate costs)

It was agreed to pay Ian Dover a recognition payment of £100 for the work he had done up to now in maintaining the grass and hedges around the play area.

The Clerk was asked to purchase a goal net for the play area goal.

- **Newsletter.** Nothing to report.

9:55pm Meeting Closed.

¹ Safe and Sound are the company who originally built the Play Area

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DEMOCRATIC PERIOD

- It was suggested that the original Deed of Transfer for the use of the land for a play area is checked for conditions regarding possibly moving the play area.
- Concern was raised again regarding overgrowing hedges in the village, making it difficult in places for pedestrians to walk safely along the roads.
Councillor Butcher confirmed that it was ultimately the responsibility of the owner of the hedge to keep them cut back to a safe level, however if they are dangerous they should be escalated to BCC Highways – warning that they could take time to be addressed.
The owner of one offending hedge was living abroad – raising the issue of what should be done in that situation.
It was agreed that Tony Barber should send a list of offending hedges to DM who would recommend to Council properties that should receive a letter from the Council reminding them to cut back their hedges.
- Questions were raised regarding the Gypsy and Traveller Consultation. It was noted that the formal consultation would commence ~~on 1st January 2014~~ early in the new year². CDC needs to identify sufficient locations for the Gypsies and travellers to be able to ‘move-on’ to other sites.

10:15pm Closed.

Signed

Date

² Amendment agreed at Full Council meeting 18th November 2013