

COLESHILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023 at 7.00 pm,
held at the Village Hall, Barrack Hill, Coleshill

Parish Councillors:	Tony Treacy (AT) Chair Louise Templeton (LT)	Jon Herbert (JH) Nigel Suttie (NS)
Parish Clerk:	Lynda Jackson (LJ)	
County Councillors:	Carl Jackson (CJ)	
Members of Public:	8	

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs. Tim Butcher, (Bucks) Cllrs. Gemma Clifford-Newman, Ben Morgan (CPC)
2. **Minutes of previous meetings:** It was moved by AT and **resolved** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16th September 2023 be signed as a true record of the meeting.
3. **Declaration of Interest:** None
4. **Councillor vacancy – 1**
5. **Matters arising:**
Meeting Closed: 19:02

DEMOCRATIC PERIOD- Those speaking did not object to their names being recorded.

- Emails from John Conway – *Council had been sent copies of several emails from Mr Conway over the last few weeks raising concerns about the use of the Common by UKPN. Also included were emails he had sent to Network Plus who had been working at Chalk Hill corner reburying the cable. Mr Conway attended the meeting in person, along with neighbours, and showed Council a hand drawn map of works on and off the Common around Chalk Hill, opposite his property, over the last 6yrs. Using the plan to explain the drainage arrangements Mr Conway emphasised the importance of the berms and the silt chamber / gully in containing the surface water runoff from the Common. They also explained that the berms are a deterrent to would be fly tippers and parking vehicles.*

The residents then outlined the impact of the incursions on the Common by Bucks CC in 2018 /19, UKNP in 2022 and UKNP Plus in 2023 in terms of the poor quality of their reinstatement of the area and the existence of unmarked HV/LV cables laid in waterlogged ground with no warning signs. The residents raised the following questions for consideration and response by the P C at its next meeting.

1 WHY ARE COMPANIES ALLOWED TO TREAT THE COMMON AS WASTE LAND, LAYING UNMARKED HV CABLES IN WATERLOGGED GROUND AND FAILING TO REINSTATE TO AN ACCEPABLE STANDARD? WHY AREN'T BUCKS CC, UKNP and UKNP Plus BEING PURSUED FOR THEIR OMISSIONS, OR IS PUBLIC MONEY NOW REQUIRED TO REINSTATE PROPERLY? IS THERE A NEED FOR WAYLEAVES AGREEMENTS WHICH PROVIDE FOR GREATER BENEFITS TO AND CONTROL BY THE PC.?

2 WHAT'S THE PC'S PLAN FOR THE PROPER REINSTATEMENT OF THE AREA (INCLUDING DRAINAGE PROPOSALS) AND WHEN WILL THOSE RESIDENTS OVERLOOKING THE AREA BE CONSULTED?

3 WHAT'S THE PC'S VIEW ON THE SAFETY OF UNMARKED HV/LV CABLES IN WATERLOGGED GROUND ON A PUBLIC COMMON? HAS THE H&S EXEC BEEN CONSULTED?

4 HOW IS IT THAT UKNP HAD A LEGAL ENTITLEMENT (or NOT) TO LAY CABLES ON THE COMMON GIVEN THAT THE P C WAS INITIALLY UNAWARE THAT UKNP WAS ON COMMON LAND. ?

5 AT WHAT POINT DO THE UKNP 2022 CABLES CONNECT TO THE PRE EXISTING UKNP Plus CABLES?

- Email from John Conway regarding Common trees overhanging Chalk Hill- *The Parish Council may be aware that from time to time residents of Chalk Hill have to remove large branches of trees*

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which have been damaged or dislodged from the Common's overhanging trees by passing fast moving pantechincons / highsided vehicles. The damaged branches are then left, sometimes perilously hanging over the highway, or those dislodged fall onto and obstruct the roadway and users of Chalk Hill. Given this situation, which appears to be occurring more regularly, the Parish Council may wish to give consideration to the potential consequences of a damaged or dislodged branch of a Common's tree falling and causing an accident to a passing pedestrian or vehicle, as well as considering its Duty of Care and the legal responsibilities of land owners in instances where their trees, for which they are responsible, overhang the highway.

The overhanging branches will only get longer and heavier, particularly as all trees have had a huge spurt of growth over the recent rainy spell, and further, the Commons trees are fouling / entwining the overhead wires / cables serving properties in Chalk Hill.

- *Len Tridgell regarding the works now in hand at Cherry Tree Farm, please could the PC see fit to writing to the owner, Mr Paul Knapfield, regarding that part of the garden boundary which fronts onto the Tower Road/Village Road/New Road intersection. We are anxious to maintain the rural openness of this part of the Village and with that in mind, respectfully suggest that any replacement fencing being considered for installation along that frontage be of a type and height comparable with the Estate fencing (open metal railings backed with hedging of similar height), Fencing of this nature has and continues to be effectively employed at several of the larger dwellings in Coleshill. A request in these terms would, I feel be appropriate from the PC, and is more likely to be given more favourable consideration be the recipient.*
- *Len Tridgell regarding the Chilterns being considered to be awarded National Park status.*
- *Email from Len Tridgell thanking Council for getting the bollards reinstated at the entrance to Tower Rd from A355.*
- *Rosalind Pearce regarding the future work of UKPN on New Rd. UKPN will return to complete the works after damaging cables in earlier works. Ms Pearce asked when the road surface will be reinstated to a satisfactory standard.*
- *John Conway regarding blocked gullies – Mr Conway would like Buckinghamshire councillors to walk the village and see the number of gullies that are blocked there is 1 by the duck pond that floods every time it rains. **JH explained there is an Asset register that Bucks uses and also on Fix My street you can see all the gullies on the maps so are able to report them if they are blocked. JH has identified drains in the village that aren't on Fix my street` and despite asking for a set of maps of the drains Bucks are not able to supply them. AT informed Mr Conway the drain by the pond has collapsed and is to be replaced.***

Meeting re-opened: 19:27

6. Clerk's Report: - **Letter from Park End Cottage**– It was **agreed** that an email be sent to the owner that the issue of a suggested trench is now closed and there will be no further correspondence with him regarding this matter.

Village Litter-picks – Council **agreed** that with no co-ordinator coming forward the pre-arranged litter picks will stop. The equipment will be collected and offered to residents who wish to continue independently. If there is an increase in litter, then Council will arrange a clean-up day that has the same effect as the one co-ordinated in Hills Wood.

Amersham Community Hub agenda items – It was **agreed** that Council will send items of interest

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to the Hub for their meetings that will be recorded under Standing items on the agenda.

Hill Meadow play area – After the last meeting LJ had enquired with a local resident with young children how often Hill Meadow play area is used. The response was: *It was used so much more frequently when it had more equipment in it. I do really think that this could be a point of investment for the council to make it into the most wonderful hidden gem within Coleshill, attracting so many more people to the area and providing a wonderful facility for all the children in the village (of which there are many now!). It would be such a shame to see it go and I really hope they can come up with a new idea for it. We definitely need a slide and the baby swings as the Cricket club park doesn't have that. But equally some more challenging equipment for the older children as again there is nothing like that here. I could see it as being a real draw for people who are moving into the village and I know it would get a lot of use if the equipment was better!*

Since then, the play inspection has identified that the swings are now a moderate risk as they are potentially beyond their expected life along with the multi-play. AT suggested that this could be an opportunity to completely refurbish the site for young children by looking into funding opportunities like the Community Ownership fund. AT expressed that it could be not safe as it is and that even closing it would be costly as the equipment would have to be removed and the site resurfaced and then maintained. It was **agreed** that AT & LT would discuss funding opportunities, speak to users of the site and the resident who gave feedback before the next meeting. Details would be available for discussion at the next meeting.

Clerks' laptop– It was **agreed** that with the rise of phishing and scam emails anti-virus software should be obtained for the equipment. IKON had recommended Sophos Home as a start which had an introductory offer of £37.46. Council **approved** the cost.

Recording of names in the Minutes – It was **agreed** that those wishing to speak at Democratic period should be asked if they had any objections to being named in the minutes or prefer to remain anonymous.

7. Report from Planning, BC updates:

i) Ref. No: PL/23/3444/KA Land South of Coleshill Pond Village Road Coleshill - Noted

Ref. No: PL/23/3451/FA | Red Cottage Tower Road Coleshill e HP7 0LB **NO OBJECTION**

Ref. No: PL/23/3506/FA | Hertfordshire Lodge Coleshill Lane Coleshill HP7 0PD **NO OBJECTION**

Ref. No: PL/23/3507/HB | Hertfordshire Lodge Coleshill Lane Coleshill HP7 0PD **NO OBJECTION**

Ref. No: PL/23/3722/FA | Hertfordshire Lodge Coleshill Lane Coleshill HP7 0PD **NO OBJECTION**

Ref. No: PL/23/3723/HB | Hertfordshire Lodge Coleshill Lane Coleshill HP7 0PD **NO OBJECTION**

ii) **Bucks update** – CJ had explained above during democratic period that Councils do not have any statutory powers over Utility companies, but they must notify Councils when they will be undertaking works. CJ advised Council that Bucks are currently finalising their budget for 2024-25 with 65% of expenditure taken by adult social care/ child services and Highways although things are incredibly tight, he wanted to assure residents that Bucks is in a financially stable position. Bucks have set aside £105m over 4 years to be spent on highways with an extra £1.6m coming from government. CJ informed the meeting that 22,000 gullies had been cleaned but they were continually finding more that were not on the asset register. He asked that if CPC informed him of missing gullies, he would ensure they were added and arranged for cleaning out. CJ asked that CPC stay connected with Amersham Community Board and don't be held back from applying for funding because of match-funding.

iii) **Transport report** –JH had circulated his report prior to the meeting. Included were details of the current flooding issues affecting the village school. Work will start during the Christmas break to correct the problem. JH had attended the tree survey on the Jack Adams field and along with fellow

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volunteers cut down several smaller trees requiring felling. A quote for larger trees has been received for CPC to consider. Council and residents were asked to notify JH of any tree issues that affect the highways so that he can inspect and where needed report on Fix my street.

iv) CIL payment -The Council were pleased to receive a Community Infrastructure Levy payment of £8142.60 which could be used to part pay for the speed reduction limit for Magpie Lane.

v) Notice of Appeal - The Spinney, Magpie Lane, Coleshill – Noted

vi) Speed limit change for Magpie Lane response from Bucks on costs & proposal to fund the cost.

– CPC had received a written response from Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport for the letter previously written to Martin Tett. Cllr. Broadbent had obtained from Highways a listed breakdown in cost but did not state the number of hours being used for the project. The costs still appear exorbitant and unexplained fully. It was **agreed** that Council would write back confirming they wish to go ahead with the scheme as funds have been raised but suggest that as in Cllr. Broadbent's letter the overall cost could be significantly lower that a deposit be given of 2/3rds of the cost i.e.£8k with the balance paid on completion when the actual cost is known with a detailed breakdown sent to CPC. Council **approved** resident pledges to be capped at £100 and that along with the CIL funds received the current balance of the Road Safety fund held in the Councils bank account would make up the shortfall. The Clerk was asked to contact those residents who had pledged to give them an update and details of the Councils bank account.

vii) Bucks Devolution policy & Contact from Zoe Ford – Council was made aware of recent contact from Bucks Devolution co-ordinator who was asking for any Town or Parish who may be interested in taking on Devolved services for some highways work. LJ was asked to contact Zoe to arrange a meeting so that members could learn more before deciding as to whether to 'Express and Interest'.

8. Report from Open Spaces: NS & LT had provided reports that were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

i) Monthly Play inspections & PROW report – LT had completed her reports before the annual play inspections with no issues. Due to only just receiving the inspection reports LT will analyse them and give her report on any action to be taken at the January meeting.

ii) CMC report – NS advised that the volunteers had scalloped the perimeter of the grassland border. The planning application for the ash trees at the Pond has been approved and will be sent to Cholesbury Tree fellers who will be completing the work. The CMC had recently met with BBOWT who had supplied a Meadow Management Plan. Tree work has been completed to open up 'The Ride' area of the Common. Following a complaint from a resident on Chalk Hill the CMC have agreed that some work on overhanging branches may be necessary. LJ was asked to chase Ridgeway Woodlands for their quote for work listed on the tree survey.

iii) LNRS report from CMC – Chris Wege had completed a report for the Local Nature Strategy team at Buckinghamshire Council to show what could be achieved in the village to encourage biodiversity and wildlife. Chris expressed that it would need someone who was very dynamic that could take on such a project. It was **agreed** that the report be sent to the team at Bucks.

iv) Quote for treework at Jack Adams Field – The quote received from RB tree and landscape services Ltd was **approved**. Funds are set aside in the 2024-25 budget and the contractor would be asked to complete the work in the new financial year.

v) Xmas lights check– JH advised he has been unable to get responses from a platform company to be able to clean and restore some of the lights. It was agreed that the work be deferred until the summer of 2024.

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9. Finance: The RFO had provided a report which was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

i) Cashbook, Bank balances and reconciliation as at 30.11.23 – the previously circulated documents were **agreed and signed**, there were no outstanding issues.

ii) 2024-25 Budget final draft for approval- Council **approved** unanimously the Final draft budget of £17370 for the financial year 2024-25.

iii) 2024-25 Precept request approval – In order to balance the books without using General Reserves Council **approved** a Precept request of £14,472 for the financial year 2024-25. This is an increase of 11.26% on the current year. The Band D Property Council tax demand for the Parish will rise from £39.89 to £44.38 per annum.

iv) 2023-24 NJC new pay scales – Council **approved** the new pay scales which are back dated to 1st April 2023.

10. Items for payment:

The payments CB23-101-through to CB23-105, CB23-123 through to CB23- 134 for November & December totalling £4456.13 were **approved**.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR DECEMBER 2023

CB No.	NAME	ITEM	TOTAL	VAT	NET
CB23-101	L Jackson	october pay	410.58	0.00	410.58
CB23-102	L Jackson	lonos fee, top up & IONOS My website now	44.80	5.80	39.00
CB23-103	A Davis	editor software for newsletter	19.97	3.33	16.64
CB23-104	David Hall	village hedge & verge cutting	1056.00	176.00	880.00
CB23-105	IKON ICT	office subscription	10.30	74.40	-64.10
CB23-123	L Jackson	November pay	597.55	0.00	597.55
CB23-124	HMRC	3rd qtr tax & ni	393.28	0.00	393.28
CB23-125	L Jackson	lonos fee, top up & IONOS My website now	48.80	6.46	42.34
CB23-126	A Davis	editor software for newsletter	19.97	3.33	16.64
CB23-127	Village Hall	CMC meeting	10.00	0.00	10.00
CB23-128	Ridgeway Woodlands	tree surveys Common & JAF	200.00	0.00	200.00
CB23-129	ABS	printer cartridges	46.58	7.76	38.82
CB23-130	IKON ICT	office subscription	10.30	0.00	10.30
CB23-131	Printed Easy	newsletter printing	250.00	0.00	250.00
CB23-132	Cedar Park Tree Care Ltd	Common treework	1080.00	180.00	900.00

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CB23-133	Play inspection Co ltd	annual inspections	198.00	33.00	165.00
CB23-134	DM Payroll Services Ltd	2nd half payroll fee	60.00	0.00	60.00
	TOTAL		4456.13	490.08	3966.05

11. Councillors reports for areas of responsibility:

Tennis Club AGM – AT had circulated the Minutes of the meeting which he had attended. The report was noted.

Cricket Club screen storage – AT advised the meeting that the Cricket Club will hold their AGM on 8.1.24 and he will attend. He will raise the concerns regarding the storage of the cricket screen. JH asked that they be reminded that they rent only a certain area of the Jack Adams field, and it causes a lot of concerns from residents and neighbours when they are encroaching over their agreed boundaries.

12. Next Meeting date: Monday 15th January 2024 7.00 pm at Coleshill Village Hall

20: 14pm.Meeting Closed.

Signed Date