

# COLESHILL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

**Of the Common Management sub-committee meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00 pm, held at the Village Hall, Barrack Hill, Coleshill**

Committee members: Nigel Suttie (NS) Chair  
Chris Wege (CW)  
Steve Thompson (ST)  
Steve Bowers (SB)  
Derek Higgins (DH)

Parish Clerk: Lynda Jackson (LJ)

Parish Councillors: Jon Herbert (JH)

Members of Public: 4

Prior to the meeting starting NS suggested that the Democratic period be moved to the end of the meeting so that the public have the opportunity to listen to all the meeting and then to ask questions or raise concerns.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Graham Thorne (GT)
- 2. Committee members:** 1 Councillor representative vacancy
- 3. Councillor representative vacancy:** It was agreed that Cllr. Gemma Clifford-Newman should be approached to join the committee. It was thought that Gemma would be able to co-ordinate events planned on the Common along with 4 residents who have shown an interest.
- 4. Matters Arising – Graham Thorne's responses to Council questions raised.** The committee discussed the 4 responses by GT to the parish council on issues raised at the last PC meeting. All **agreed** that help would be required next year and that there should be a mix of village and outside agency volunteers. It was accepted that the committee had been lax in organising work parties efficiently and more needed to be done to get engagement from the village to help with the maintenance of the Common & Pond. Regarding the Pond question from Council CW believed the plant work required could be managed by the committee. It was **agreed** that CMC would check with GT which trees needed attention to open the Ride so that a short survey could be undertaken, and a quote requested.  
**Glis Glis on Common affecting adjoining private property** – Advice from Ian Snudden, Buckinghamshire Council was that all vegetation that might be growing up the property should be removed, and any overhanging branches also removed. NS advised that the owners had received 2 quotes for work that would remove 3 large trees that could fall on the house and coppicing of some hazels and were prepared to fund the cost. ST felt that a precedent could be set regarding the glis glis. (A similar concern was raised by a resident in Democratic period). It was **agreed** that NS should contact the owners to contact the PC for approval to carry out the work.
- 5. Local Nature Recovery strategy:** CW gave an overview of the webinar he had attended. The project has been set up nationally according to the Environment Act 2021. At present it is a fact-finding mission, but Bucks want to have as much input from local organisations as possible to help set the strategy. CW has signed up to communications. It was **agreed** that CMC would put forward suggestions and concerns that they believe should be included or considered when setting up the strategy, which is expected to be published in 18 months. It was **noted** that CMC hoped the PC would also look at other areas they are responsible for.
- 6. Ash trees at Pond update:** David Stowe (Bucks Council) had been contacted for advice about the ash trees at the pond which were suspected of having ash die-back. David and his tree surgeon visited the site and agreed that all 3 trees should come down. David had **agreed** a quote which he asked to be put into the 2024-25 budget so that the work can be done in the spring. It was **agreed** that the resident of 9. The Bit should be informed as the trees do have branches that reach over into his garden.

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**7. Willow trees trench work at pond:** NS confirmed that the pollarding of the willows had been completed. Cllr. Herbert advised that the owner of Park End Cottage had requested that the trench be extended in length and away from the boundary. He advised that the Council were waiting for the landowner of the cottage to accept the risk before commencing with the original approved trench. If the trench plan is changed then it is possible there will need to be a fresh planning application submitted as the tree is protected and sits in the conservation area.

**8. Action plan 2023-24 review of work completed :** NS talked through the work completed so far this year and what works were still to be done. JH offered to use one of his machines to move the spare aggregate providing the bags are not rotten. With GT out of action it was agreed that outside help was probably needed for the scalloping. Contact would be made with Chiltern Society to find out what has been agreed by GT and the costs involved. It was one villager's view that the best time to do the grassland cut was October or November when the butterfly eggs would have settled down in the earth and not be affected by the cutting and removal of the cuttings. The view of Chiltern Rangers, BBOWT and the Ecologist at Future Nature WTC, who has just completed the Common Ecology Report is that now is the best time to make the cut. It was **agreed** that the grassland cut booked with Chiltern Rangers on the 8 September would go ahead but leave the scabious area for the butterflies. The verge cutting by Remy was discussed and it was **agreed** that the cut should be made earlier next year.

**Meeting Closed: 20:10**

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### DEMOCRATIC PERIOD-

*Dick Ware regarding the Glis Glis agenda item. Mr Ware felt there was no need to seek permission to remove over-hanging branches but there is a distinction between that and cutting down trees. The danger is that the Glis Glis will just move on. The Committee & Council if giving permission should be careful that they are not setting a precedent for other requests from residents to come forward for other trees to be cut down.*

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**Meeting reopened: 20:14**

**9. Action plan for 2024-25:** It was **agreed** that the committee should consider the number of work parties they are proposing per month in the future to ensure they get commitment from others and get more involved. It was also **agreed** that it was important to have a clear programme of work parties that can be published well in advance. The committee **agreed** that help from outside volunteer groups would be needed next year be it TCV, Chiltern Rangers or the Chiltern Society.

**10. BBOWT Ecology survey**– All had received and read the survey and asked for it to be published on the village website.

**Small mammal survey** – GT had arranged for a small mammal survey on 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> September. Traps would be laid on the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> September and then the following morning villagers would be encouraged to come along and see what the results were.

**11. Finance – Quotes for work** – LJ reaffirmed the procedure for agreeing works that if contact was made with contractors or volunteer groups then a quote must be requested, and the Clerk copied in so that the quotes can go to council for approval. No works must be planned in unless this has occurred.

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**Budget 2024-25** – SB had updated the budget spreadsheet since the first draft was sent to Council in July. SB was asked to put monies in for 3 volunteer agency support days, replacement trees for the pond (ash removal) and tree work for `The Ride`. The admin hrs cost was also amended, the updated version would be sent to LJ within a few days so that it could be discussed at the next PC meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

**2023-24 spending review** – the committee had been sent a copy of expenditure against budget as part of their papers.

**Setting up a calendar of events** – It was agreed that LJ would set up a schedule of maintenance works etc. for next year so that items are planned in the diary to the correct timescale according to best practice e.g., grassland cutting.

**12. Co-ordinator for 2024 public participation events** – see item 3

**Meeting Closed: 20:35**

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#### DEMOCRATIC PERIOD-

*Stephen Jones regarding the dates of meetings published in the village newsletter which are different to what took place. It was explained that due to Bucks Council budget deadlines dates had to be changed. It was agreed that a memo would be sent to the newsletter editor asking him to put a notice in the next edition with the new dates.*

*Stephen Jones regarding communication from CMC to the village as it is clear you need help. Better communication of why and when you need help might generate more interest and it needs more forward planning. It is clear lots of things are being done but you don't tell people. Work parties need to be communicated with more notice, a week before is insufficient.*

*Terry Reilly regarding the CMC's agenda which appears to be managing the common as a nature reserve whereas a lot of people want to use it for family time. The CMC should not be prioritising ants over people.*

*Terry Reilly regarding tonight's democratic period please don't put it at the end of a meeting again.*

*Terry Reilly regarding the 11 acres of the Common surely 1 acre could be put over for resident use. More flat grassland is needed that is cut regularly and well maintained and can be used by families for ball games etc.*

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**Meeting re-opened: 21:04**

**13. Next Meeting date:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 7.00 pm at Coleshill Village Hall

**Meeting closed: 21:05**

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Signed ..... Date .....