

# COLESHILL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

of meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014, in the Village Hall

### Present

Parish Councillors:	Terence Prideaux (TPx) (Chairman)	Dick Ware (DW) (part)
	Carol Hallchurch (CH)	Elaine West (EW)
	Dave McGhee (DM)	
Parish Clerk:	Linda Collison (LC) (Clerk)	
Members of Public:	4	
County Councillor:	Tim Butcher (TB)	
District Councillors:	Graham Harris (GH) and Alan Hardie (AH)	

### Open Forum

No matters raised.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received prior to the meeting from Parish Councillors Lynn Woodgate and Dick Ware (who was unable to join until about 9pm).

#### 2. Minutes of previous meetings

It was moved by TPx and resolved unanimously that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013 be signed as a true record of the meeting.

#### 3. County Council

##### Highways

DM reported that he had attending the Local Amersham Forum (LAF) on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014, to raise the ongoing highways issues in Coleshill, specifically Sampsons Hill and Barracks Hill Triangle. Although these issues were not included on the LAF Agenda (as requested) DM was invited to make a statement to the Forum, after which the Chairman (Martin Philips) asked the Transport Localities Team Leader (Si Khan) to investigate the matters further. He was advised that that BCC will only take action when there is a safety issue.

DM confirmed that the information requested had been submitted to Ms Khan, who had subsequently liaised with TB.

TB explained that part of the issue was due to the recent structural changes to the Local Area Technician (LAT) team. The technicians for the Coleshill area now were Wayne Fabian and Michael Raven.

TB confirmed that he had spoken to Ms Khan and the situation was as follows:

- **Sampsons Hill.** An order for the work had been raised by LAT Dave Griffiths in September, but at the time this was not viewed as a category 1 issue, therefore no action had been taken. However the work was now scheduled for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014, when the earth from the pile at the bottom of the hill would be cleared and used to fill the holes and broken edges along the road.

TPx and DM agreed to update TB to confirm work completed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Action completed 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014

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- **Barracks Hill Triangle.** TB explained that before any work could be approved for the Triangle, a Road Safety Audit was needed which would cost approximately £600. TB kindly offered to pay for this Road Safety Audit from his Community Fund.

Action : LC to obtain a funding form from TB

It was agreed by members that the grass in the centre of Barracks Hill Triangle should be replaced by a slightly raised hard surface that could be driven over without causing damage to vehicles.

Action: TB agreed to discuss this with Ms Khan.

DM also expressed his concern that having reported **flooding** in the village (the puddle in front of the War Memorial) engineers had visited the site on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014, and explained that they could find no puddles. Photographs taken today (Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014) of the area, clearly showed a large puddle.

Action LC: to forward the photographs to TB<sup>2</sup>

TB confirmed that he would request that the drains in Coleshill are cleared, but warned that there was only one drain-clearing vehicle available in the County.

**Posts in roadside verges:** DM confirmed that the post in the verge outside the tennis club was still present and other similar posts had been identified throughout the village.

DM expressed his thanks to TB for his intervention and help in these matters.

### County Council Tax increase

TB explained that a 1.5% rise in (County) Council tax was likely, however the County could not impose a tax increase above the 'bar' set by government, without a referendum. The 2014-15 bar will not be announced until the day before the next BCC meeting, at which the Council Tax for 2014-15 will be announced.

TB added that even with the rise, there will still be a cut in expenditure including a reduction in spend of footpath maintenance.

## 4. District Councillor

### District Council Tax 2014-15

GH confirmed that there will be no increase in District Council tax for 2014-15, however there will be a 24% decrease in the Council Tax Benefit Scheme grants awarded to Parish and Town Council.

GH explained that in 2013 the Council Tax Benefit Scheme had been passed down to District Council (from Central Government) which had resulted in a different method of managing the benefit and everyone paying some form of Council tax. The implementation has resulted in the following changes which impacts Parish Council funding and (Parish Council) tax.

- Reduction in tax base<sup>3</sup>

A reduction in tax base means that residents in the parish will have to pay a higher Parish Council tax to maintain the same funding (precept) for the Parish Council.

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<sup>2</sup> Action completed 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014

<sup>3</sup> Band D equivalent properties

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- Introduction of a grant payment to the Parish Councils.  
A grant is paid to each Parish Council to mitigate the impact of the reduction in tax-base.  
The grants for 2014-15 are being cut by 24%. These grants will be phased out in the future.

*(Refer to agenda item 8 for details of Coleshill's Parish tax and grant)*

### **Delivery Development Plan Document (DDPD)**

GH advised that the public consultation for the DDPD will commence in February, adding that Wagoner's Bit was still included as a potential gypsy site, however the document is still not finalised.

### **Planning Process**

AH explained that he sits on the CDC Planning Committee and will help CPC with any planning questions or concerns.

Note: Prior to the meeting AH had explained the planning processes (including when an application goes to Committee) to CH and LC, confirming that both he and GH can request that a planning application is considered by Planning Committee (rather than by an officer).

*DW joined the meeting.*

## **5. Correspondence**

**DDPD - Gypsy and Traveller site consultation:** TPx reported that CPC had received a letter from Mr Graham Winwright (CDC planning) advising that the comments from CPC for the Gypsy and Travellers site consultation had arrived after the consultation period and therefore too late to be considered. LC was asked to contact Mr Winwright to explain that at the time, CPC were advised that although the submission was late, their comments would be brought to the attention of the members considering the Gypsy and Travellers Site Consultation (part of the DDPD).

**HS2:** A response to the HS2 Phase one Environmental Statement (ES) had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The document expressed concern regarding the adverse impact that the construction and maintenance will have on the A355 and other roads surrounding the village. It was agreed that if time permitted, TPx should obtain the view of a local environmentalist before submitting. Action TPx.

**Tree Preservation:** TPx reported that on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014, a letter had been sent to Keith Musgrave, CDC Planning Tree Officer, regarding the large willow at the pond (TPO reference TPO/2005007 – Tree 2). The letter asks for advice on how CPC can control this larger willow while respecting the TPO. The letter also explained that CPC are concerned about potential liability it may incur to the owners of the two properties next to the willow.

**Buckingham House Party:** An invitation had arrived to nominate someone from the Parish to attend the Royal Garden Party on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014. Action All: Suggestions for nomination to be sent to TPx for submission by 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014. <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Action completed 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014

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### 6. Chairman's Remarks

**War Memorial:** TPx reported that cleaning the War Memorial would mostly likely qualify for a grant from the War Memorials Trust. The scheme awards grants of up to 50% of the costs to a maximum of £2,500, however the grant stipulates that certain cleaning materials/suppliers should be used. Concern was raised that this be a more expensive solution than the existing quotation from Creative Memorials. LC and TPx to investigate.

LC reported that she had instructed Creative Memorials to do the work which would be completed with-in the next 1-2 months.

**Jack Adams' Field Working Party:** Twenty-three residents had confirmed that they would be interested in joining a working party for Jack Adams' field. The first meeting, to be held at The Red Lion, would be arranged shortly. TPx to arrange.<sup>5</sup>

### 7. Calendar of Events.

Members were asked to review the Calendar of Events, Clerk to update and circulate. Action LC.

### 8. Finance

#### RFO report (EW)

- The **2013-14 accounts** as at 27<sup>th</sup> December 2013 were presented:
  - Bank Balance was £17,027.02
  - Cashbook Balance was £16,279.62 (£747.40 un-presented cheque)
  - Spend 1<sup>st</sup> Apr - 27<sup>th</sup> December 2013 was £5,946.07
  - Receipts 1<sup>st</sup> Apr – 27<sup>th</sup> December 2013 were £13,703.59  
Major receipts are Precept (£8,000), VAT reclaim (£4,402.56) and Christmas greeting donations (£532.50)
- Following the submission of information to the Internal Auditor, as previously requested, the Auditor raised two points of concern:
  - No budget had been set for 2013-14, raising concern over the Council's budget process. It was agreed that the budget process was now under control, the budget for 2014-15 was approved at the December 2013 Council meeting, and that the year estimate in the 2013-14 accounts is, from today, the current year budget.
  - Members should be given the opportunity at the beginning of each meeting to declare their interests, which should be minuted.  
It was agreed that declaration of interests should be included in all future agenda and minuted appropriately. Action LC
- It was agreed that the review of internal control would be deferred to the next meeting.

#### 2014-15 precept and grant

It was proposed by DW, seconded by DM that the total funding required for 2014-15 was £8,000, which is the same amount as 2013-14.

This is comprised of the CDC grant (£95.79) and a £7,904.21 precept.

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<sup>5</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014 : First Working Party Meeting arranged for Wednesday February 5<sup>th</sup> 2014, at the Red Lion, with a second meeting pencilled in for 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

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### 9. Approval of items for payment

It was proposed by EW and agreed unanimously to approve the following items for payment:

Description	Payee	Power	(£)
Clerks Wages November	L Collison	LGA 1972 S112	Confidential
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Payroll Services	HASE Payroll Services	LGA 1972 S112	£58.00
CDC printing news letter	Amersham Town Council	LGA 1972 S111	£112.10
Play Area Bark	Amersham Town Council	LG (Misc Prov) Act 1976	£744.10
Finance Training Course	BALC	LGA 1972 S112	£45.00
Hire Hall for meetings	Village Hall	LGA 1972 S111	£88.00

### 10. Planning

#### New applications:

- **CH/2014/0006 - Windmill House, Replacement outbuilding.**

DW reported that the Council had no objections to this application. The rebuild is on the same footprint and the building is screened by trees.

- **CH/2013/2149 – Coleshill Church of England Infant School (BCC ref CC/05/14) - New ramp and door to the north side of the building.**

DW reported that a resident living next to the school had raised concerns over this application and that he would report back to members after he had discussed the issues with the neighbour.

- **CH/2014/0018 - Windmill Farm:**

*Meeting paused while Mr Nolan, owner of Windmill Farm addressed the Council. Mr Nolan outlined the new plans and confirmed that these were his preferred plans, but if refused he would exercise his permitted development rights.*

*Meeting re-opened.*

DW reported that he had met with Mr Nolan and thanked him for engaging with the Council on this application.

DW explained that there was approval for an entrance to be cut through the hedge and verge at the front of the property on a previous planning application – this is to prevent the builder's vehicles being parked on the road during construction.

DW concluded that in his opinion this application was acceptable, providing a condition is applied requiring the hedge and verge is restored to their present condition after construction.

#### CDC Planning Decisions:

- **CH/2013/1830 - Ongar Hill Cottage**

DW reported that this application had been approved by CDC.

- **CH/2013/1835 - Dewpond**

DW reported that although the CDC planning officer has recommended approval, the formal notice has been deferred subject to legal agreement.

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- **CH/2013/1977 – Chalk Pit House**  
DW reported that no decision has been made yet.

### 11. The Village

- **Common and Pond.**

*Meeting paused while Mr Wege addresses the Council.*

Mr Wege had received two quotes for the removal of carp from the pond, one for £400 and one free of charge – provided the company can have the fish. This fish are being removed to improve the quality of the water.

*Meeting re-opened.*

- **Verges.**

LC advised that from looking at the maps on Parish-On-Line there were several roadside verges in the parish that probably had no owner. It was agreed that LC should apply to the Land Registry to confirm ownership status of the main verges.

TB reported that BCC held maps showing which parts of the County they owned. TB offered to send copies of the maps to the Clerk.

### 12. Meetings/Training

- TPx advised that he would be attending the CDC Chairman's Liaison meeting on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014, and that the Clerk would be attending one (or more) of the quarterly CDC Town and Parish Clerks Liaison meetings.
- The Clerk will also be attending the BALC Finance Course on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014, unfortunately EW (RFO) is unavailable that day.

### 13. Councillors' Reports

- **Open Spaces.** DM reported that the path clearing on the Common was on going, and the roadside along Barracks Hill had been cleared
- **Website.** DM reported that Gordon Moar, the prospective deputy web-master had met with Derek Higgins to discuss maintaining and supporting the village website. DM explained that Mr Moar had strong technical skills which, if he agreed to take on the role, would be very useful.

DM explained that transferring the ownership of the website to the Council was proving more complicated than thought and that the owner of the website needed to possess a credit card. LC to investigate whether a Parish Council can own a credit card.

DM added that at the Clerk's request, Derek Higgins had added a new page for the Parish Council that included just the Parish Council's meeting dates and minutes.

- **Play Area.** LC reported that:
  - The new **bark** had been laid.
  - AON (Parish Council's insurance company) had confirmed that provided the company making the **repairs** to the play area equipment (as detailed in the inspection report) was a reputable company; and that once the work was completed it was signed off as safe to use; the repairs would meet their requirements.Amersham Town Council (ATC) had confirmed that after completing the repair work,

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they would take photographs and sign the work off as completed.

LC subsequently instructed ATC to make the repairs.

- ATC have been asked to advise whether a wood preservative would help reduce **wood rot** and be safe for children. No reply yet.
- New warning notices had been put up at the play area because TPx had noticed that the insurance policy states that "unless agreed otherwise by the insurer any **repairs** or other work identified must be completed within sixty days of the inspection".

Action: LC to discuss with AON.

- **Cricket Club.** TPx reported that he had been to look at the boundary fence and was advised that it would cost about £2000 to repair in materials.
- **Tennis.** Nothing to report.
- **Village Hall.** Nothing to report.
- **School.** Nothing to report.
- **Newsletter.** DW requested that members should bring items for the next Newsletter to the February Council meeting. Deadline for inclusion in the next Newsletter is 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

9:50 pm Meeting Closed.

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### DEMOCRATIC PERIOD

- Tony Barber reported that the cricket club has agreed to repair the cricket boundary fence themselves, as best they can.
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Signed .....

Date .....