

Clerk to the Council: **Joy Pegrum**

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MINUTES of the
Meeting of Coughton Parish Council
20th September 2017, Coughton Primary School, 7pm

Present: Cllrs John Gittins; Len Carter; Maureen McTavish and Roy Piddington, Joy Pegrum (Clerk).
In attendance: County Cllr Clive Rickhards; Head Teacher of Coughton Primary School and 3 members of the public.

1) **To Elect a Chairman**

A. **Cllr Roy Piddington was duly elected Chairman** for the meeting

B. **Chairman's Declaration of Office was duly completed & signed**

2) **To co-opt a candidate for casual councillor vacancy**

Lynne Stanton put herself forward as prospective Councillor for Co-Option to the Council and was **duly Co-Opted with unanimous approval**, until next quadrennial elections for the parish in May 2019. Councillor Stanton's **Declaration of Office was duly completed & signed**.

3) **To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Stratford District Councillor Mike Gittus, via the Clerk.

4) **Public participation (10 minutes)**

The Chairman read the following declaration: *Members of the public and press have the right to record all or any of this meeting and may do so with or without out disclosure. However, individuals are reminded that if recordings are streamed, saved or later published, there is a duty to comply with data protection regulations beyond the Council's jurisdiction and the Council cannot be held responsible for any resulting breach of those regulations.*

A new resident in the village, a paramedic by profession, introduced himself to Council.

5) **To receive Disclosure of Interests**

Chairman reminded Councillors that their Code Of Conduct provides that should they have a prejudicial interest in any matter under discussion, they should withdraw from the room and not seek to influence a decision about the matter.

No interests disclosed

6) **To agree Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th July 2017**

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2017 and Quarterly Financial Review were previously distributed and published and since no objections or amendments were raised, were **duly signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.**

7) **School Report**

Head of Coughton CofE Primary School summarised his recent report to the governors as follows:

- **Attendance:** well above the national average at 97%
- **Punctuality:** always an issue as many children travel from beyond the village but improvement strategies (e.g. drop off route; car sharing) are contributing to improvement
- **Results:** Above national average in Key Stage 1 SATs and Key Stage 2 SATS (Reading, Writing and Maths combined).
- **Priority focus for 2017-18** is SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) and also times tables, in preparation for a new tables test being introduced in 2018.
- **Staff:** a new member of staff has joined the team
- **School Fete** ('Farmers Market'): well attended by parents & residents (all village residents were invited)
- **Perimeter fence:** rotting wooden sections are being replaced by Local Authority with green mesh along hedging and Highways are looking at the possibility of a safety barrier for the roadside stretch (WC Councillor Rickhards offered to chase progress this).
- **Networking:** good links fostered with local secondary schools for joint activities with pupils from both Alcester Academy and Studley High.
- **Car Park:** (ongoing issue for over 4 years) local MP Nadhim Zahawi's visit to the school in July and subsequent interest has resulted in a meeting planned for October which will bring all stakeholders together (School; Highways; WCC; Trustees; Whites) to discuss requirements and funding.

8) **District and County Councillor's reports**

A **WC Councillor Rickhards** reported that:

- i. he will be pleased to be attending the planned meeting about the school car park
- ii. the cross county Traffic Summit, reported in previous minutes, went ahead and solutions to the problems of the A435 were presented but are being kept confidential whilst being considered. A review of acceptable/viable solutions expected on Nov.3rd and this is to be followed by some public consultation.
- iii. the deadline for applications to the WC Councillors grant scheme is 9th October 2017.
- iv. the deadline for applications for road signage - another WCC grant is 31st October.

v. on request from Flood Group, he will investigate plans at county following the failed central funding bid.

B **Stratford District Councillor Gittus** – not present

9) **To receive Clerk's report**

A **Matters arising from previous meeting:**

- **Councillor Vacancy and Elections:** the casual vacancy was advertised but no request for an election received within the required time frame. SDC confirm that the next quadrennial elections for the parish will be in May 2019
- **Bank mandate and internet banking applications:** held up due to a problem with the type of account – this can be resolved if Council confirm the Clerk/RFO has the title and acts as 'Secretary' on banking matters.

Council approved unanimously to confirm the Clerk's appointment as 'Secretary' for banking matters.

- **Transparency Fund;** successful I application was made and a grant of **£1208 received**, for:

Staffing (backdated to March)	504.00
Training	54.00
Laptop/software purchase	550.00
Scanner purchase	100.00

Council approved and gave their authority for the clerk to proceed with purchases accordingly.

- **External Audit** – now signed off with no issues carried forward. Notices posted to website and notice board accordingly.
- **Overgrown Hedges on Path & Verges** - Problems resolved by Councillor Carter – no letters needed.
- **Speed signs** down in Sambourne Lane & Coughton Fields Lane: reported to & repaired by Highways.
- **Abandoned roadwork signs** – reported to Highways (Item 13 B refers).
- **Vandalised Ford depth sign** – reported to Highways who have suggested providing spare signs (Item 13 B refers).

B **Admin issues**

- **Risk assessment**
 - **File storage, physical & digital** – information & digital back up passed to Chairman for safe for safe keeping
 - **Notice board** – needs safety inspection
 - **Financial assessment** to form part of the budgeting procedure
 - **Internal Systems** – I accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2, Councillor Carter will verify reconciliation
- **Training** - No courses attended this period but 2 identified to complete induction training for the Clerk's standard year.

Clerk's Training approved unanimously by Council

- **The Link** - copy sent to David Shaw: Councillor McTavish will verify inclusion request a copy be sent by post to Clerk each month

10) **Village Group Reports**

- A **Flood group** – WCC funding bid to central government for surface water strategies failed. There is a small fund possibly available to individuals but there are many restrictions & advice is being sought on how best to utilise this. Ditch clearance is being considered but it's unclear how effective this would be.
- B **Community group** – reported that:
- Coughton Fete** was one of the best yet – very well attended and supported. Proceeds have been distributed to the school, PCC and Community fund.
- Village Walk** – successful with 20-30 people taking part
- Hog Roast** – well supported & enjoyed by over 100 people
- Cemetery** – Volunteers sought for next Clean Up & Planting day 14/15 October
- Crime watch** – car crime team operating in the area – primarily interested in Audi's – vigilance advised – call 101 to report suspicious persons or activity.
- C **Transport and traffic group** – reported that no response to the approach made to police on revising the current camera strategy, as reported in previous minutes. An incident with a large coach in Sambourne Lane was reported, but there is currently no size or weight restriction/advice in place there.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Karen Gazey and Denis Hackett on behalf of the Council and community, for the exceptional work they do on these issues and activities.

- D **Friends of the ford** – reported that the remaining work is now in progress and the contractor has now fitted the rail as promised. However – the wire fence has been damaged – whether by accident or vandals is unclear. The installation of a rubbish bin by SDC is outstanding but planned. **Council agreed to review the position and adequacy of the bin over the 2018 summer period.**

Council approved the expense of emptying the bin by SDC (currently £105.75 annual charge for collection).

11) **Planning**

New Planning Notices & decisions since last full meeting

The Chairman reminded the meeting that planning notices, responses and weekly status updates are now published on the Parish Council Website.

Barn, Coughton Lane, 17/01227/FUL
Conversion of Barn to Residential Dwelling
17th August 2017 - No objection by Coughton Parish Council
Updated: 20/09/17 Application Withdrawn

Coughton Lodge, 17/01811/VARY

Variation of condition 02 (plans condition) of planning permission 16/02251/FUL to allow a minor amendment to the design, concerning set back and windows.

Status update: 08/09/17 - Pending Consideration

26 Coughton Lane, 17/01686/HHPA

Prior approval notice for erection of a single storey rear extension.

26th July 2017 - SDC Decision - No prior approval required

14 Coughton Lane, 17/01593/FUL

Retrospective application for satellite dish - front wall of property

28/7/17 - Permission granted

2 Parkfield Cottages, Haydon Way, 17/02354/HHPA

Prior approval notice for erection of a single storey rear extension.

6th Sept 2017 - SDC Decision - No prior approval required

2 Parkfield Cottages, Haydon Way 17/01473/FUL

Erection of Two Storey Side Extension

5th July 2017 Supported by Coughton Parish Council

19/7/17 - Permission granted with conditions

14 Coughton Lane 17/01369/TREE

Fell Conifer & Reduce/thin Lilac; Holly; Apple trees

13 June 2017 - No objection by Coughton Parish Council

30/6/17 Permission granted with Conditions

Councillor Gittins outlined an 'affordable housing' opportunity on land adjacent to April Cottage but reported that this is reliant on the successful listing of covenants by Thos White Charities and National Trust. The outcome of this is awaited.

12) Finance & Accounts

Council received and approved the following financial summary and payment schedule from the Clerk: cheques were duly signed.

Bank bal c/fwd 1/7/17		14124.29
+ Payments received	1208.00*	
Less payments		2348.92
Balance to take forward		12,983.37

** Transparency Grant*

Schedule of Payments

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CHQ No.	EXPENSE
8/8/17	J Pegrum (Clerk's wages/expenses) R*	200335	484.43
6/9/17	J Pegrum (Clerk's wages/expenses)	200336	216.99

** R = retrospective*

13) Governance

A Policies & Procedures Review

- i. Amendment to SO15a 15.

Since no other 'staff member' is employed by Council, it was proposed that Standing Order 15a should be amended to read '*The council shall appoint an appropriate Council Member to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.*' with deputising to be combined with the role of internal financial checker, since this is the only other person who is not a bank account signatory. **Approved unanimously by Council.**

- ii. To adopt Transparency & Publishing Policy & Procedure
Approved unanimously by Council
- iii. To adopt Grants Policy
Approved unanimously by Council
- iv. To adopt Media Policy
Approved unanimously by Council
- v. **Additional Item:** To adopt Communication Policy
Approved unanimously by Council

B Vandalism Strategy.

Council discussed the necessity for dealing with issues of vandalism/damage & other matters relating to anything not CPC responsibility but requiring immediate or interim action in the interests of safety, e.g. road & road works signs; litter at the Ford; hedge cutting etc.

One suggestion is to budget for cost of a local handyman or contractor.

Clerk will investigate and report

C Data Protection

Council discussed if early actions in preparation for new Data Protection (GDPR) law were necessary, or if it should wait until the law comes in (May 2018).

Council decided to wait until nearer the time.

D Village Plan

Council discussed a review of Village Plan (as per Min 8 Nov 2016)

Council decided to plan this for 2018/2019

E Clerk's Appraisal

Councillor Gittins, as Chairman for last period, had conducted the Clerk's appraisal and contract review. He reported that both Clerk and Council were pleased with achievements and recommended that the contract should be

amended to show the title of Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to match the job description with an increase in standard contracted hours to 28 hours per month.

Council approved unanimously.

F Surplus Funds

Due to shortness of time, Council agreed to carry forward this discussion to the next meeting.

14) **Correspondence**

A. Shared correspondence

I. SDC s106 Briefing:

SDC has notified that in future a Parish Council may choose to manage any financial contributions from developers made for community projects, taking control of creating and carrying out the project and of paying its contractor without recourse to the District Council.

Council acknowledged this option.

II. Charter for Trees

Council discussed:

Collecting signatures towards tree planting (nationally not locally)
Council decided against.

Applying for a (free) tree to plant in Coughton;
Council agreed that Clerk will liaise with the school and apply if space is available in school grounds for planting.

Distribution of newsletters received
Council agreed that Clerk will liaise with community group leaders

III. Police Liaison – a Rural Crime Team has been set up & is keen to interact with parish councils.

Council decided that this will be reviewed again in spring.

IV. Community Defibrillator

Clerk advised of many approaches from defib. Companies. Councillor McTavish confirmed that there is one at the school but that access is therefore restricted.

Council agreed that Clerk will liaise with school and look into community training for responders.

V. Plunkett Foundation information received & posted on the website

Due to shortness of time, Council agreed to carry forward this discussion to the next meeting.

VI. Bulb or other planting

Due to shortness of time, Council agreed to carry forward this discussion to the next meeting.

B Councillors Correspondence

None flagged for discussion.

15) Any Other Business?

None

16) Date of next meeting:

The next full meeting was confirmed as 15th November, 7pm, at Coughton Primary School

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.00.

Signed/date: _____