

Clerk to the Council: **Joy Pegrum**

37 Westbourne • Honeybourne •
Worcestershire • WR11 7PT

☎: 01386 830995

email: clerk@coughton.plus.com



Coughton Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Coughton Parish Council 21st March, Coughton Primary School, at 6pm

Present: Councillors John Gittins (in the Chair), Len Carter, Maureen McTavish, Roy Piddington & Lynne Stanton; Clerk, Joy Pegrum and 25 members of the public in attendance.

- 1) **Apologies were received from WCC Councillor Clive Rickhards**
- 2) **Public participation**
 - a) A request was made for an update on progress towards a school car park;
 - b) The state of local roads with erosion and potholes was brought to the Councils attention
 - c) A request was made for an update on progress with the village defibrillator.
- 3) **To receive Disclosure of Interests**

None disclosed
- 4) **To agree Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th January 2018**

Draft minutes had been duly published on the Council's website: no amendments had been received or were proposed and a copy was agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.
- 5) **District and County Councillor's reports**
 - A Cllr Rickhards – not present/none submitted
 - B Cllr Gittus – not present/none submitted
- 6) **To receive Clerk's report on matters arising from previous meeting:**

Bank Mandate - HSBC Finally confirmed the mandate has been updated as requested. No mention of a change of status from free to a chargeable account seems to have resulted, so the account will stay with them for now.

Road Repairs – an urgent repair had been requested and actioned near the A435 traffic lights; remaining repairs were held up by weather emergencies but chased; photos of erosion in C. Lane & C. Fields Lane have been sent to Highways. **The Clerk was asked to similarly report conditions Sambourne Lane.**

School parking – a follow up with Carolyn Burrows at WCC found that a programme of works for the next two financial years is currently being put together (2018/19 and 2019/20) under the Safer Routes to School project. She assured that Coughton

School will be included in this programme, but they won't start to develop plans until later in the year: no details are available yet but comments from CPC will be invited nearer the time.

Defibrillator – planning applications were submitted to SDC 26th Feb, followed up 16th March and are currently with the conservation team

April Cottage Development Consultation – WRCC are still trying to find a venue within the village: school is ruled out on safeguarding and security grounds; an answer is awaited from Coughton Court and a suggestion of Kings Court Hotel has been passed on, in preference to Alcester Rugby Club.

Phone box – a condition complaint was lodged with BT and an engineer visited & serviced the box. **Photos of the external condition need to be sent to request re-painting.**

HMRC – despite confirming in 2017 that no reporting or employer payment would be necessary as my salary is below threshold, a demand was received. Following a challenge quoting earlier correspondence they claimed to have no trace of that letter but confirmed that the demand has been closed.

End of Year/Audit - training attended but still awaiting forms & notice of exempt status from the new external auditor; internal checks have been completed twice during the year by Councillor Carter (for bank reconciliation accuracy & payments correctly authorised as per Financial Regulations); internal audit is arranged for April.

PC training – for new laptop completed.

GDPR – review of procedures and preparation for new legislation was carried forward but must be addressed now. **Training is available 3rd May and Councillors Stanton & Piddington have agreed to attend with Clerk.**

Upgrade of bus stop bench: provision for cost is built into 2018/19 budget. Choices will be researched and put before Council in May.

- 7) **Village Group Reports** – due to the shortness of this meeting (to accommodate the Parish Assembly that followed), reports were published on the website in advance of the meeting and are attached here to form part of these minutes. Councillor Carter further reported that a meeting has now been arranged regarding Spring weeding at the Ford and that a mystery 'Road Closed' sign was causing driver confusion at Coughton Fields Lane. No closure had been notified and Clerk was asked to take this up with Highways.
- 8) **Planning: No new applications had been lodged since last meeting and the following updates were noted:**
 - 10 Coughton Lane**, 18/00120/LBC & 18/00119/FUL
New timber access gates to existing dwelling (Grade II listed)
13th February 2018 - Response: no objection received by or from CPC
2nd March 2018 - Application approved

Coughton Fields Farm, 17/03637/LBC and 17/03636/FUL

Change of use & conversion of buildings to 5 dwelling houses, demolition of farm buildings, erection of garage and bin stores and associated development.

15th & 17th January: Response: no objection received by or from CPC

22nd February: Application amended to 4 dwellings - comments to SDC Planning requested in writing by 15th March.

9) **Finance & Accounts**

A **RFO Financial Statement & Financial Summary was received as follows**

Bank bal c/fwd		12116.58
Payments received	50.00	
Less payments made	728.20	
Balance to take forward		11438.38

B **Approved Schedule of Payments was received as follows**

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CHQ No.	EXPENSE
7/2/18	J Pegrum (wages/expenses Jan)	Tsfr	343.67
13/2/18	Spanglefish (website hosting)	Tsfr	29.95
16/2/18	Calico (website domain renewal)	Tsfr	24.00
28/2/18	J Pegrum (wages/expenses Feb)	Tsfr	330.58

C **Final draft Budget for 2018/19 was published on the Councils website in advance of the meeting. No further amendments were proposed and the Budget was duly approved.** It was noted that although the precept was to remain unchanged, a small growth in Coughton's population will result in a slight reduction to residents. **A copy of the budget is attached and forms a part of these minutes.**

10) **Correspondence**

A a) **An email from WALC** highlighted that SDC have yet to nominate a Parish Champion, in line with the Local Council's Charter which they signed 2 years ago. This is not the case at WCC, Warwick District and North Warks. Council agreed that a letter requesting the reason for delay should be sent.

b) **Details of a radar speed sign received**, claiming impact of average speed reduction of 25%. Cost of purchase would be £1400-1800. Council decided to review this following the response to representations sent to WCC this week.

B **No correspondence was received by individual councillors**

11) **Any Other Business**

a) **Regarding a venue for April Cottage Development Public Consultation:** Councillor McTavish moved that should cost be an issue in bringing this to a venue in or closer to the village, Council should make a contribution. This was

agreed, **up to a maximum of £100.**

- b) Regarding Coughton Cross monument:** Councillor Piddington asked Council to consider a project to restore the remaining parts and to add a facsimile recreation of the missing parts. Clerk confirmed that it is a scheduled monument standing on National Trust land. Enquiries are to be made of the Trust and Warwickshire Museum as to what might be possible and/or desirable. Decision on a project is deferred pending this information.

- 12) **The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 16th May 2018.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7pm.

Signed:

Date:

(Village Reports & Budget follow)

Coughton Parish Council Meeting 21st March 2018

Village Group Reports

Flood Group

We have recently been reminded of how precarious our situation is, not just from the recent adverse weather but in having again to pay a massive surcharge to insure village homes. The Insurance Company are interested in knowing exactly what measures have been undertaken by the Council to reduce surface water flooding but do not deem the drainage survey and clearance carried out to have been enough; despite assurances that plans were afoot, residents have been hit again with a massive annual insurance renewal fee.

We desperately need some positive action to change this status quo, but Mark Banning (Assistant Drainage Engineer, Flood Risk and Water Management) has responded that whilst a plan has been devised together with Highways, its practicality and feasibility remains to be established. He reassured, however, that irrespective of this he would continue to look for alternative or additional measures that could be implemented. We have tried to ascertain the expected timescale for feasibility study, hoping from that to discover if this 'plan' might see fruition but have not yet received a response to this.

Den has walked all of the ditches between A435 and the river to check they are all clear and flowing after the recent bad weather. These provide the essential outlets from the Highways drains and thus prevent water building up in the centre of the village. All were working, although some could be clearer and are a little overgrown but water was flowing away.

Community Group

Neighbourhood Watch: serious damage caused to St Peters Church Coughton when lead was stolen from the roof.

Planned Events -

- 16th April 2018 Preliminary Fete Meeting to discuss ideas and involve volunteers. To be held in the Courtyard Tea room at Coughton Court at 7.00pm
- 28th/29th April 11.00am - 3.00pm Volunteer weekend at Coughton & Sambourne Cemetery, Sambourne Lane.
- 7th July Coughton Fete
- 11th August Village Hog Roast

Transport & Traffic Group

Following notification from WCC Councillor Clive Rickhards of a consultation on A435 traffic problems, a notice of concerns and a call for action were sent to Nick Dauncey at WCC.

Coughton has been suffering from traffic issues on the A435 for many years which affects both residents and local schoolchildren. We had been working in conjunction with the school, and local District and County councillors, with a joint aim of having a school car park that would help to alleviate the problem. The scheme was shelved recently, we understand, for financial reasons, and this was a great disappointment to everyone.

One of the strong arguments we had for our case was the serious threat to the safety of schoolchildren, (as well as all pedestrians), when mixing with the traffic on the A435, and the local lanes. There was an expectation that a school park with direct access to the A435 would force a review of the local traffic situation and introduce some form of traffic calming measures, such as a lower speed limit, effective safety cameras, traffic controls at peak times, etc. as part of the overall scheme.

The school car park, is no longer a possibility, but the increasing threat to road safety still remains, as we have greater volumes of traffic, more cars entering and leaving the A435 from several locations, but we no longer have 'a scheme' on which to hang the essential improvements to road safety. With the increasing level of housing in Alcester, possible expansion of the Arden Industrial Estate, and the Eastern Gateway looming on the distant horizon, residents are naturally very anxious about its future impact on Coughton and the school. The village lies halfway between Alcester and Studley, and on the main route between the Vale of Evesham and Redditch/South Birmingham. Although we would always support genuine economic development it must go hand in hand with an infrastructure to support it and we have grave concerns that the village could not withstand the pressure that will inevitably be placed upon it.

Regular events, such as extreme weather and motorway closures, highlight the fact that many residents live just a few feet away from homes that bear the full brunt of heavy goods vehicles, and this is not going to improve without a reduction in traffic volume.

We would implore you that, as part of major review of the road network across this part of the county, our concerns are given the attention required.

Regardless of the wider review, the issues have been raised many times with Council Officers, who, despite their support on the ground, have not translated this into any substantial measures to protect both residents and school children from the ever increasing dangers.

John Gittins

Friends of Coughton Ford

A request to the maintenance contractor GMH Forestry for a quote for two/three jobs planned for completion late winter/early spring has not generated a response. This will be followed up shortly.

The National Trust have been approached with regard to splitting and moving some of their over-crowded Snowdrops to the Ford Area, but no response has been received. The time for planting snowdrop bulbs is quickly disappearing and so this may have to wait until next year now. The next planning meeting of the Ford Group is due to be called at the beginning of April.

Coughton School

No updates on Car Park & nothing of note to report.

(Budget follows)

Expense Type	End of year Projection 2017/18	Budget 2018-2019	Notes & Rationale to 2018/19 Budget
Operational Costs			
Clerk salary	3389.00	3644.00	Allows for annual increment to NJC point 16 - £9.20 p.hr (rounded) for 2018/19
Telephone/Travelling/Office Costs	400.00	300.00	Includes travel necessitated by training commitments
Insurance	190.00	300.00	Expected increase due to new insurance co. + increased asset cover & ins tax
ICO Fee - (Data Protection)	35.00	35.00	ICO registration is a legal requirement but was not on last years budget
Internal Audit	30.00	40.00	
External Audit	0.00	0.00	We SHOULD be exempt for 2018 but this is not yet confirmed
Printing	0.00	0.00	Nil: Costs of admin printing are covered under Stationery/Postage below and in office allowance and expenses
Village Event	150.00	150.00	Parish Assembly
Village Maintenance	1740.00	450.00	Ford ongoing costs: weed control and SDC Litter collection; path repair
Stationery / Postage	30.00	10.00	1 x toner + 1x ream paper + postage
WCC - School Hire	90.00	95.00	Allows for poss rate rise
Election	0.00	0.00	None planned: any unexpected election cost will be met from reserves
Website/Internet	44.00	55.00	Allows for poss rate rise
Total	6098.00	5079.00	To be met from precept with shortfall from reserves
Other Costs			
Clerk/Councillor Training & Resources	200.00	1080.00	Includes cost of Cilca certification for Clerk & training for new councillor
S137 grants & expenses	123.50	1332.32	Community services & grants - capped @7.57*176
Capital expense	1646.00	1500.00	Seats & recreation etc. + upgrade of Village gates & speed signs
Build to reserves	0.00	0.00	Sufficient reserves are in hand
Total	1969.50	3912.32	
Subscriptions & Donations			
WALC membership	94.00	100.00	Allows for a possible increase
Link magazine	100.00	100.00	
Churchyard Maintenance	230.00	230.00	
Total	424.00	430.00	
Total Expenditure	8491.50	9421.32	

Village Plan sales	0.00	0.00	
Precept	4500.00	4500.00	
VAT Reclaim	226.00	210.00	
Village Community Fund	1400.00	0.00	
Transparency fund	1208.00	0.00	
Total Income	7334.00	4710.00	
Balance	-1157.50	-4711.32	This is a deliberate negative balance planned to reduce reserves to a more appropriate level.
Projection			
Projected end of 2017/18 reserve balance		11268	
2018/19 expense & disposal bal		-4711	
50% of precept for contingencies retained in reserve		-2250	
Remaining reserve for reduction 2019-2021		4307	Following risk assessment, a reduction of reserves over 3 years via community services, grants and donations is planned