

MINUTES OF COATES PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2022
7.30PM Coates Village Hall

Chair for this meeting: Robbie Whitfield

Councillors and Officials:	
Whitfield, Robbie (RW)	Chair
Harris, Stephen (SMH)	Councillor
Clement-Davies, Ann	Councillor
Dobson, John (JD)	Councillor
Gilly Torry-Harris (GTH)	Councillor
Brown, Jacqueline	Councillor
Alan Moorcroft (AWM)	Clerk/RFO

Members of the Public:
Large, Simon (SL) Tree Warden
Berry, Tony (TB) CDC councillor

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Hobson had sent apologies in advance due to personal reasons.

2. DECLARATION OF MEMBER INTERESTS ON AGENDA MATTERS including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests

All Councillors present declared that they had no such interests.

3. CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR

All of the required paperwork has now been completed. JB was welcomed to her first CPC meeting. The website is to be revised to remove the advert for a new councillor.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 27 SEPTEMBER 2022

The minutes were agreed, signed and dated.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

One has just been received (22/03599/FUL) and no comments received to date.

Planning Notice has been agreed and posted on the Noticeboard and website.

The licencing application (C/22/01396/STC) was discussed. TB explained that CPC could object, comment or accept. RW raised a concern about the location from a road safety perspective. JB thought that adequate provision for refuse collection should be included.

6. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR TONY BERRY AND TREE WARDEN SIMON LARGE

SL provided detail about ash dieback disease. There are c.125m ash trees in the UK, with c.60m not in woodland, and c.1bn saplings; approximately 12% of all UK trees. Ash dieback was first detected in Poland in 1990 and reached the UK in 2012 but only noticeable in recent years. In 10 or so years all UK ash trees will have died, but thankfully other trees will not be affected. Winter dieback has now been detected where trees lose leaves but recover in spring. Cutting back of diseased trees has taken place for health and safety reasons, but this is not a problem for woodlands. In Coates some cutting back has already taken place. Those on the Trewsbury Road are not particularly large; consideration of lobbying GCC should be considered, although they are concentrating on higher risk areas. SL did not consider the Coates position a particularly high risk, but we will need to continue monitoring the situation. RW asked if something can be written up for the Watershed magazine and website. The replacement of

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removed ash trees with new trees is already in hand. JD asked about identification of diseased trees. SL thought this should be done by a qualified tree surgeon.

SL provided an update on Bledisloe. The owners have agreed in principle to moving the cricket pitch away from the houses and for the demolition of the cricket pavilion.

TB reported to the council. Speeding in the village was considered. TB explained more modern cameras are now available. Anecdotal evidence of residents speeding has been established. RW has received a further response from Richard Gray still rejecting a 20mph zone. In the absence of a reduced speed limit it might be necessary to try an educational approach. RW will try and talk to school children. AD has already been looking at acquiring stickers reminding drivers to reduce their speed. TB will provide contact details of the police officer who oversees speed watch groups. RW will take the lead on this issue and AWM will look at re-circulating emails on this topic.

Other issues discussed. CDC has been looking at the income crisis. Details have been received by CPC and displayed on the website. CDC has been reviewing its constitution. Due to a drafting error and EGM was required to implement the proposed changes. TB will supply details of 2 funds – UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England – which can be used to fund community initiatives. The recycling centre can now be booked on the day. A number of fly tipping fines have been issued; any further offences will result in names being published. CDC's recovery investment strategy – borrowing money to fund projects – has now been shelved. CDC's planning department has been in a poor state for some considerable time; it is hoped that the appointment of a new manager is beginning to rectify the problems. Most planning arrears relate to Heritage issues. Problems are now being seen in Planning Enforcement but again it is hoped these are being successfully addressed.

TB left the meeting.

SL advised that all of the work under the Build Back Better scheme has now been completed. Stephen Hirst (GCC) had been helpful in the making of the grant application.

SL left the meeting.

7. FINANCIALS

Paid from pre-approval includes clerk's net pay £406.20, WAH allowance £54.00 and HMRC PAYE £101.40. All paid on 3 October. Paid invoices are GAPTC for clerk's training £45.00 (28 October) and grass cutting £306.00 (9 November).

There has been an increase in the National Pay for clerks proposed. This would increase AWM's hourly rate to £11.28. AWM left the meeting while the councillors considered the proposal. On returning AWM was informed that the National Pay increase had been proposed and accepted.

Pre-approval was proposed and accepted for the clerk's pay £435.80 (net of PAYE) which included back pay at the revised hourly rate, WAH allowance £42.00 and HMRC (PAYE) £109.00 and PATA payroll services £36.35 (includes an additional £5 for calculating the clerk's back pay).

Revised bank mandate – add RW and remove AH –has been handed into Lloyds, Cirencester.

Mary Leonard has been appointed as the internal auditor for CPC. The next step is for AWM to make contact and establish what action is to be taken / information provided.

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8. BUDGET

AWM had done some initial work in preparing a spreadsheet with initial figures and a statement (based on the previous year's budget). From May 2023 onwards CDC will be re-charging costs incurred in elections and something will need to be included in the precept request. An increase in website costs will need to be included in the next budget. A suitable figure will need to be included for the maintenance of council assets. It was agreed that RW and AWM will work up some figures and circulate to all councillors for consideration. The 2023/24 budget will need to be agreed at the January 2023 meeting.

JB asked where the financial information was stored? CPC financial information consists of bank statements, invoices and financial records held by AWM on his laptop. In the event of any incapacity to AWM then the records could be retrieved by the IT services provider (Athena).

9. PLAYGROUND

Keith Austin (KA) continues to provide valuable assistance in the maintenance of the playground and its equipment. An updated estimate has recently been received from All Out Play. No action will be taken on this estimate as Greenfields remain the preferred contractor. AWM explained that the estimates received from both contractors did not completely mirror all of the items in the RoSPA report. It was proposed and agreed that as long as KA is satisfied that the latest estimate from Greenfields covers all items that he considers necessary then they should proceed with the work.

The barriers erected by Bromfords when they repaired the wall have still not been removed. AWM will follow this up.

10. MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ASSETS

Consideration was given to the maintenance of council owned assets. Assets will be identified from the Asset Register. A decision will need to be taken as to whether any maintenance work will be put out to tender, or perhaps could be undertaken as an organised, voluntary event.

SH and GTH will look at what needs to be done, and how and report back at the next meeting.

11. ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING

1. The potential sharing of the costs of trimming the hedge at 3 Victory Green will be considered as part of the maintenance of council assets. AWM to update the owners of the proposed action being taken.
2. The councillors email addresses have now been added to the website. Item closed.
3. Website services. The councillors are satisfied that Athena give good value for money and their services are to be retained.
4. 20 mph speed limit. Richard Gray (GCC) is still against this and so it is unlikely the speed limit will be reduced. It is more likely that improvements will be made through education. Consideration will be given as to whether the budget will need to include funds for speed restriction initiatives.
5. Trewsbury Road / A433 junction. GTH understands that red paint is to be added through the centre line and on approaches as well as countdown markings and changes to the approach signing. These are likely to be completed in the spring.
6. RW has sent a letter to the Master of the Hounds but has received no response. The letter pointed out the fixed penalties applicable for dog fouling and reminded the Master of his legal responsibilities. AWM is to update the residents of the action taken.

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7. Since the last meeting AWM has located a further contract for grass cutting services. AWM is to communicate with KP Gardens and establish both the length of the contract and what is to be included.
8. Allotments. Due to time constraints AWM has not managed to take any action on this subject. Item to be rolled over to the next meeting agenda.

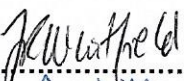

12. OTHER ITEMS

1. Councillor training. Proposed and accepted for cost of JB attending the Being a Better Councillor Parts 1 and 2 to be paid. AWM will make the booking.
2. Civility and Respect. Contents of 4/10/22 email from GAPTC considered. While sympathetic to the sentiment it was thought to be not necessary for CPC to adopt as council run on satisfactory lines.
3. AWM, GTH and JB had dialled in to a CDC Zoom meeting on elections. AWM updated the councillors on the two main issues. First was the election process and the most notable change was for voters to need some photographic ID in order to vote; if not held a Voter Authority Certificate can be obtained. The other issue is the decision that election costs are to be re-charged to councils. This will commence with the May 2023 election. Initially a proportion of the costs will be re-charged and subsequently all costs will be recharged; costs will initially be incurred by CDC and then recharged to councils based on the number of potential electors. This will have an impact on the amount of the precept. AWM to send brief note of both issues.
4. JD reminded the councillors that £350 had been paid to CDC in anticipation of the costs related to the potential road name change. As no change had taken place this amount will recover. AWM will review the correspondence and take appropriate action.

13. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 30 January 2023.

The meeting closed at 21.45

Chairman Signature: 
Parish Clerk Signature: 
Date: 30 Jan 23

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 30 January 2023 at Coates Village Hall.

Electronic copies of these and previous Minutes are available from the Parish Clerk:

clerk@coatesparish.org.uk