

MINUTES OF COATES PARISH COUNCIL (CPC) MEETING
 MONDAY 7 AUGUST 2023
 7.50PM Coates Village Hall
Chair for this meeting: Robbie Whitfield

Councillors and Officials:	
Whitfield, Robbie (RW)	Chairman
Harris, Stephen (SMH)	Councillor
Gilly Torry-Harris (GTH)	Councillor
Brown, Jacqueline (JB)	Councillor
Alan Moorcroft (AWM)	Clerk/RFO

Members of the Public:
Large, Simon (SL) Tree Warden
Hirst, Stephen (SH) GCC Councillor
McKeown, Mike (MMc) CDC councillor
5 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES

None.

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

None.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 18 MAY 2023

Draft minutes of the last meeting had been considered by the councillors. It was proposed and seconded that they be taken as an accurate record. The minutes were signed.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No comments had been made on the application for Little Dockem, Coates (23/01679/FUL).

5. RECEIVE REPORTS RELEVANT TO COATES PARISH

SH had supplied an electronic update in advance of the meeting. SH provided details of new machines acquired by GCC to repair potholes. They should be brought into action shortly and hopefully will lead to repairs being “once and done”.

MMc had already provided an update on CDC matters during the APM.

SL had considered the GCC offer of additional trees as part of the ash dieback project. Dwindling suitable sites and volunteers to undertake the work were becoming an issue. A small number of trees will be requested to replace those lost and the Highways Agency will be asked to consider planting on some verges.

Item 8 was dealt with at this point. The estimates for the proposed tree survey was considered. Before any decision is taken the clerk is to determine how quickly AJ Arborists can undertake the survey if appointed.

6. PLAYING FIELD

RW explained that CPC had been asked by the Village Hall Committee to approach the owners of the land adjacent to the Hall, requesting to lease or buy it for the purposes of a sports field. During the meeting this was broadened to include an extension to the Hall and a pavilion. It was noted that the land is currently rented out for Polo Pony grazing. Because of CPC’s limited resources (funded by residents through Council Tax) and the fact that this would not be a priority for all residents, it

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stated that it was not in a position to pursue such a project, taking into account the considerable risks, costs, and long term implications. CPC currently funds, manages and maintains the village playground at considerable expense and administration. It has no legal obligation to provide additional facilities in our small village. Nevertheless, the Council agreed to give the matter further consideration.

7. FINANCIALS

From pre-approval clerk's wages at National Pay scale 11, WAH allowance and associated PAYE were paid on 19 May. Similarly postage of £6.85 was paid on the same date.

A transfer of £2,500 from the Precept account to the Treasurers account had been necessary to pay invoices due. Recent invoices received included Athena (IT services) £376.80, Village Hall (room hire) £170.00. Additionally contractual payments of clerks wages at National Pay scale 11, WAH allowance, associated PAYE and for grass cutting services had become payable. Due to the postponement of the 20 July meeting these payments had been agreed by email. In order to ratify this all payments were proposed and seconded. Payment of an invoice from CDC for printing (£26.44) was proposed and accepted. The unexpected invoice from Council Online (£48.00) was considered and rejected for payment. The direct debit due to the Information Commissioners Office (£35.00) was taken on 28 July.

Approval to pay Paul Atkinson £22 per hour for the maintenance / garden work in Coates was considered. It was proposed and accepted that as this was the best offer received payment could be approved.

The bank reconciliation and analysis of receipts and expenditure at 26 June 2023 was considered, proposed and seconded as accurate. The balances on the Precept account (£13,506.91) and Treasurers account (£522.62) were agreed.

There was a significant variation from the budget following the VAT receipt of £1,463.74. A further VAT reclaim will be made in October.

RW volunteered to undertake the first Internal Control review.

8. TREES

Dealt with under item 5 ⁵ ~~8~~ – see ~~last~~ ^{last} paragraph.

9. PLAYGROUND

The clerk had made some enquiries about treating algae on the play equipment. No responses had been received and this is to be chased up by the clerk.

The councillors had considered the report on the playground from Keith Austin. The recommendations relating to the warranty provided for the last round of work are to be pursued by the clerk. The other two recommendations can be rolled forward to 2024.

10. MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ASSETS

Paul Atkinson (PA) has reconsidered the hedge at Victory Green. Due to nesting birds he has not been able to undertake this work yet, but will do so very shortly. The affected

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resident objected to the lack of communication from CPC about this work. The clerk apologised and will check that the email address to which responses had been sent was correct. PA has undertaken some work at the entrance to May Tree Close.

Due to his recent illness the clerk had been unable to pursue the repairs to the Village Clock. This will be taken further shortly.

11. GOOGLE ANALAYTICS 4

It was determined that insufficient benefit would be obtained from Google Analytics 4 to justify the cost. This will not be pursued further.

12. ROAD SAFETY

AWM will ask Andrew Hobson if there has been any further developments regarding the replacement of the missing road signs. It was thought that the potential cost of replacement signs might be prohibitive.

JB has distributed the 20 mph bin stickers around the village. Further stickers will be obtained by JB to distribute to those houses that did not receive any from the first tranche. MMc has some details of new speed cameras that he will make available for consideration.

13. DEFIBRILLATOR

JB has established that the St Johns Ambulance will give a demonstration on how to use the defibrillator to up to 30 people at a cost of £600. The cost of this is too high to justify the expense. JB has also found a British Heart Foundation app that can be used and will get the details to AWM to advertise through the website.

14. DO NOT KNOCK STICKERS

AWM to obtain 20 stickers for JB to distribute through Cake and Coffee at the Village Hall.

15. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARISH POLICY DOCUMENTS

RW has reviewed the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders and believes that no amendments are due. RW to email councillors with his decision. SH had reviewed the Financial Regulations and Reserves Policies. The suggested revisions were proposed and seconded. GTH had reviewed the Risk Management policy. The suggested amendments were proposed and seconded. AWM had previously supplied a revised Asset Register. There were no questions on this and the revised register was proposed and seconded.

The Health & Safety Policy, Disciplinary & Grievance Arrangements, Data Retention and Privacy Policy, Publication Scheme and Grants Policy remain under review and will be considered at the next meeting.

16. ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING / AOB

None, other than those dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

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AWM has been informed that a key for the playground gate is held by a Village Hall committee member. It was felt that this should be held by a councillor; GTH offered to take possession. It was thought to be unnecessary to lock the gate and this will be checked.

17. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the meeting scheduled for 7 September will be rearranged for 3 October.

The meeting closed at 10:05pm.

Chairman Signature:
Parish Clerk Signature:
Date: 05 Oct 23

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 3 October 2023 at Coates Village Hall.
Electronic copies of these and previous Minutes are available from the Parish Clerk:
clerk@coatesparish.org.uk