

MINUTES OF COATES PARISH COUNCIL (CPC) MEETING
TUESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2023
7.30PM Coates Village Hall
Chair for this meeting: Robbie Whitfield

Councillors and Officials:	
Whitfield, Robbie (RW)	Chairman
Gilly Torry-Harris (GTH)	Councillor
Harris, Stephen (SMH)	Councillor
Brown, Jacqueline (JB)	Councillor
Wilson, Phyllida (PW)	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

Due to circumstances the order of the meeting departed from the agenda. The notes are recorded in the order that the items were discussed.

1. APOLOGIES

None.

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

None.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 7 AUGUST 2023

The notes circulated in advance of the meeting incorporated the councillors' comments on the original draft. A further amendment was made at item 8. The notes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

6.3 RECEIVE REPORTS RELEVANT TO COATES PARISH

SL advised that replacement trees had been received to replace those that had died, and these will hopefully be planted in November. SL had attended a presentation at the GCC tree growers which had been interesting and provided an opportunity to meet other Tree Wardens. An update was provide on the trees near the Village Hall. Due to decay one will need to be cut down, and will then be used to provide firewood to the villagers. SL asked for a copy of the CPC tree survey to be passed to him when received.

SL left the meeting.

3. CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR

CPC have a casual vacancy which has been advertised on the website and Noticeboard. PW is the only candidate that has put themselves forward, and has confirmed that she meets the requirements to become a councillor. There has been no request for an election. The councillors agreed that PW be co-opted to the council. PW completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The clerk will liaise with PW about the completion of a Registration of Members Interests.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

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6. RECEIVE REPORTS RELEVANT TO COATES PARISH

SH reported that the pot hole filling machines acquired by GCC are now operating and he is waiting to hear more about the quality of the repairs. AWM explained about the delay in having the missing road signs replaced. AWM will email SH details and he will see what he can do to speed up the process. SH was unsure who funded road safety cameras but was certain it should not be the parish council. MMc will look at what potential funds might be available to CPC from CDC. SH will look into what funds are available from GCC to assist with any purchase.

MMC gave details of CDC's Cotswolds Solar scheme in collaboration with Make My Home Green who will provide competitive quotes for batteries, panels, etc. MMc has seen a substantial reduction in his home energy costs. In response to a question MMC confirmed green products can be attached to listed buildings but planning permission is required. An average cost for installation was put at £7-10,000.

The CDC phone service is being reduced as part of a trial. Most people deal with issues online and as CDC is looking at a deficit of £1.2m the potential saving of £120,000 was considered worthwhile. Emergency issues will still be dealt with urgently by telephone.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund is open and CDC have £700,000 to allocate over 2 years. The criteria for acceptance is to improve digital services and environmental issues.

CDC are looking to transition their vehicle fleet to electric. One of the issues is a lack of charging points, especially for people without an off street charging facility. Perhaps CPC could consider installing one at the Village Hall, and collect any surplus over the electricity and installation costs.

MMc agreed to look at the criteria for receiving Community Infrastructure Levy, and whether CPC had any entitlement.

SH and MMc left the meeting.

7. FINANCIALS

The balance of the precept (£2,625) had been received on 19 September. A payment of £26.44 was paid to CDC for printing services on 10 August from pre-approved expenditure. No other invoices had been received. Contractual and statutory payments of clerk's wages at National Pay Scale rates, WAH allowance and PAYE were made on 31 July and 27 September; an overpayment of wages was made on 27 September but this has now been repaid. An amount of PAYE is due to be paid on 5 October. A contractual payment for grass cutting was made on 11 September. A contractual payment is being set up for maintenance work by Paul Atkinson at the entrance to May Tree Close.

AWM had transferred £1,000 from the Precept account to the Treasurers account on 8 September. This was to enable the payment of wages and invoices. The councillors ratified the transfer. AWM would like to keep the maximum amount of funds in interest bearing accounts. To enable this to be done permission was sought for the clerk to make transfers as necessary and then seek ratification of the transfers at the next meeting. This was proposed and accepted, on condition it did not breach the Financial Regulations. AWM is to look at whether a better rate of interest can be obtained on the funds held on deposit. For the time being CPC will continue to receive "hard" copy bank statements.

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RW had undertaken an Internal Control review for the period 1 April to 23 June and was satisfied that everything was in order. JB will undertake the next review.

8. TREES

AWM had established that AJ Arborists would undertake the survey within 3-4 weeks if appointed, a similar timescale as to that indicated by Tree Maintenance Ltd. There was little between the two quotes. It was proposed and seconded that AJ Arborists be appointed to undertake the survey as they had previously provided a good service.

9. PLAYGROUND

AWM had met with Greenfields to review the items highlighted in the report of July 2023. No issues were uncovered in respect of the large climbing frame. The crack in the support timber of the small climbing frame was insufficient to require any remedial work. A tightening of the see saw was undertaken to reduce the lateral movement. The main reason for the movement is because the support timbers are beginning to rot but not sufficiently to require remedial work at this stage.

The slippiness of the surface areas can be reduced with pressure washing. AWM is to obtain a quote from Greenfields. GTH is also to obtain a quote.

10. MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ASSETS

The hedge trimming at Victory Green has been completed by Paul Atkinson. Following the tidy up at the entrance to May Tree Close, KP Gardens have agreed to maintain an additional area at no extra cost. AWM to clarify with KP Gardens if we are paying for the grass cutting in the church yard. AWM to review which verges are covered in the contract and if they are the responsibility of CPC or GCC.

11. RAU

GTH and SMH had a very productive meeting with RAU representatives, who have offered to make their excellent sporting facilities available for use by village residents for free. CPC will advise the Village Hall Committee of this generous offer and suggest that it makes arrangements directly with the RAU. CPC will inform the RAU that it can expect to hear directly from the Village Hall Committee.

12. ROAD SAFETY

No further action is required in respect of the bin stickers. Sufficient have been distributed around the village.

AWM will liaise with SH and MMc about the missing road signs and the road safety cameras.

13. ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING

All Action Points from the last meeting had been cleared.

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14. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARISH POLICY DOCUMENTS

The minor changes to the Health and Safety Policy and Data Retention and Privacy Policy were proposed and accepted. RW asked colleagues to put the Data Retention Policy into action by clearing out any material that should no longer be held; AWM to issue some guidance on this subject. The suggestion that no changes be made to the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Grants Policy were proposed and accepted. JB talked through her proposed changes to the Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements and these were proposed and accepted; AWM to "tidy up" the document and obtain approval from JB before posting on the website. The only policy remaining to be reviewed is the Publication Scheme.

15. OTHER ITEMS

A decision on whether the Village Hall will be organising any D Day anniversary celebrations is still awaited. CPC will consider this further after the Village Hall have reached a decision.

No sites were identified as suitable following CDC's request of 6 September for sites for Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Bargee communities.

The councillors will look at reducing the material they are holding to reduce the space being used. GTH pointed out that the Athena email of 8 September was incorrect as CPC had paid for 5GB of space and was operating within that limit.



GTH provided background to 'Nominating Assets of Community Value.' CPC can notify CDC of any such assets in the village with a view to them being registered. Consideration is to be given as to whether any such assets should be nominated.

Councillors discussed the sad death of Anne Chilton on 20 September 2023. Anne was a remarkable lady and much-loved resident who served the village tirelessly for decades. The Council sent its heartfelt condolences to Anne's family and friends.

16. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING

The first meeting of 2024 will be held at 7pm on Tuesday, 23 January.

The meeting closed at 10:00pm.

Chairman Signature: 
Parish Clerk Signature: 
Date: 23 Nov 23

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 23 November 2023 at Coates Village Hall.
Electronic copies of these and previous Minutes are available from the Parish Clerk:
clerk@coatesparish.org.uk