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| **Councillors and Officials:**  |  |  | **Visitors** |
| Whitfield, Robbie (RW) | Chairman |  | McKeown, Mike (MMc) CDC councillor  |
| Gilly Torry-Harris (GTH | Councillor |  |  |
| Harris, Stephen (SMH) | Councillor |  |  |
| Brown, Jacqueline JB) | Councillor |  |  |
| Wilson, Phyllida (PW) | Councillor  |  |  |
| Moorcroft, Alan (AWM) | Clerk/RFO |  |  |

1. **APOLOGIES**

Stephan Fifield (SF) (GCC councillor) had sent an apology. A separate report had been submitted by SF and circulated among the councillors.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER INTERESTS ON AGENDA MATTERS**

None.

1. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING ON 30 JANUARY 2025**

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated in advance. They were accepted as an accurate record and signed.

1. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The original application for the replacement of an outhouse at Setts (25/00192/FUL) has been withdrawn following an objection from a neighbour. A new application is to be made and the indications are that the neighbour is now satisfied with the new application.

No comments were made regarding the tree work at The Lodge, 18 Quaker Row (25/00678/T/CONR25).

1. **RECEIVE REPORTS RELEVANT TO COATES PARISH**

The councillors considered the report from SF. This provided an update on Coates road safety issues and other county wide road issues; the councillors want to consider any wider issues arising from the sought after speed limit reductions, in particular the impact on the likelihood of development being allowed within the village. It also gave SF’s thoughts on the formation of a Unitary Authority.

1. **FINANCIALS**
2. GTH had undertaken the last Internal Controls review and was satisfied that everything was in order. PW will undertake the next review.
3. No payments had been made from pre-approvals.
4. Contractual payment of wages at National Pay scale 11 and Working at Home allowances were paid to the clerk together with related PAYE to HMRC. A payment of £162.50 was made to P Atkinson for garden maintenance work. Monthly bank charges from Lloyds account were considered by the councillors and it was proposed and seconded that they be treated as contractual payments; the first charge of £4.25 was taken on 18 March 2025.
5. The Schedule of Payments for the period from 29 January to 24 February 2025 was proposed and seconded (Appendix A).
6. Invoices have recently been received for GAPTC membership (£139.12) and the Internal Audit (£200.00). Both were proposed and seconded for payment.
7. Additionally notice had been given for the RoSPA inspection for which the report will cost £80.00. The amount payable was proposed and seconded for payment in due course. The Schedule of Payments was proposed and seconded (Appendix B).

At this point MMc joined the meeting.

1. The bank reconciliation at 26 February 2025, supporting bank statements and schedule of payments and receipts was considered and proposed and seconded as accurate by the councillors. The schedule of bank transfers (3 January 2025 £800.00, 20 January £30.00, 20 February £175.00 and 26 February £600.00) was proposed and seconded.
2. The budget statement was accepted and has been posted on the website.
3. AWM had meet the Internal Auditor this afternoon. The IA report has been signed with only one minor error; the period given for the Exercise of Public Rights was incorrect by one day. AWM will provide a copy of the IA’s report and his comments to the councillors shortly.

1. **RECEIVE REPORTS RELEVANT TO COATES PARISH (CONTINUED)**

MMc updated the councillors on CDC issues. An energy efficiency event is to be held in Kemble on 5 May; MMc will provide details to be advertised. A new CDC leader will be appointed after Joe Harris stepped down as the leader. Some GCC elections will be held on 1 May. GCC are not in the first round of changes to Unitary Authorities and so no change is likely before 2027. The constitution of the Gloucestershire Unitary Authority continues to be debated, including whether the county should be split between East and West.

MMc left the meeting at 8pm.

1. **MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ASSETS**
2. The storage of the surplus salt at the Village Hall car park has been questioned. JB will enquire as to whether the surplus salt can be held by the Snow Warden.
3. The part required to repair the Village Clock is awaiting delivery from the USA.
4. I Park’s (IP) email of 24 March concerning the state of the benches in the playground was considered. Permission was granted for IP to remove and dispose of the benches. IP is also to be asked to quote for the cost of replacement benches.
5. **ROADS**

The GCC safety officer has approved the request for a reduction in the speed limits through the village and along the Trewsbury Road. A report has been sent to the GCC Highways manager to consider; no response has been received to an email asking for an indication of timescales for a decision. CPC will need to gather together evidence in support of its application including any input from parishioners. JB will put something in the village email requesting comments once clarification over other issues has been resolved. Similarly feedback will be sought through Watershed.

1. **ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING**
2. Contact has been made with Parish Online about the creation of a new website and .gov.uk email addresses. The aim is to have these in place by mid-May allowing time for them to be checked before the existing contract ends on 31 May. The new domain name will be coatesparish.gov.uk. Further information is to be provided shortly to allow the building of the new website to happen. The format of the new email addresses will be name@coatesparish.gov.uk. JB is to make contact with the Village Hall committee to let them know what is happening and to establish their requirements. Consideration will need to be made as to whether they would be willing to share costs. Contact is to be made with the current IT services supplier to inform them that CPC will not be renewing the contract.
3. The proposed playground disclaimer signs were considered by the councillors. It was proposed and seconded that two signs were to be ordered.
4. CPC are not in a position to incur the costs of “litter picking” signs. An approach is to be made to GCC Highways to see if they have any such signs. The resident is to be informed of developments.
5. **OTHER ITEMS**
6. The councillors discussed the changes to Unitary Authorities. As no firm proposals have been decided the councillors were unable to have any firm views at the present time. Concerns were however raised that there are indications that some of the work currently done at District Council level, and planning in particular, will be moved down to parish council level. The concerns are that this will add to the workload of the clerk and the councillors, who at this time are unpaid volunteers.
7. No response has been received from the Watershed on the subject of funding from CPC. Until such time as the Watershed engages in discussion no further action will be taken.
8. The councillors considered the Community Emergency plans obtained for other councils. There was doubt as to how this could be implemented and given the lack of available resources the creation of such a plan could not be justified.
9. CPC do not want to take responsibility for managing the village telephone box. In the circumstances no action is required in respect of its proposed removal.
10. **POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting, including the Annual Parish Meeting, is to be held on Tuesday, 13 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 9:30pm.

**Chairman Signature: …………………**

**Parish Clerk Signature: ……………….**

**Date: ………………..**

**NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING:** 13 May 2025 at Coates Village Hall.

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

clerk@coatesparish.org.uk