

Clerk to the Council: **Joy Pegrum**

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MINUTES of the
Meeting of Coughton Parish Council
19th July 2017, Coughton Primary School, 7pm

Present: Cllrs John Gittins; Len Carter; Maureen McTavish and Roy Piddington & Joy Pegrum (Clerk).

In attendance: County Cllr Clive Rickhards; Head Teacher of Coughton Primary School and 1 member of the public.

1) **To Elect a Chairman**

a. Cllr John Gittins was duly elected Chairman for the meeting (item 7 refers)

b. Chairman's Declaration of Office duly completed & signed

2) **To Elect a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.**

Len Carter was duly elected as Vice Chairman.

3) **To receive apologies for absence:** None received

4) **Public participation (10 minutes)**

To receive any questions or representations from members of the public Relating to items on this agenda or on other questions

The Chairman read the following notice: *Members of the public and press have the right to record all or any of this meeting and may do so with or without out disclosure. However, individuals are reminded that if recordings are streamed, saved or later published, there is a duty to comply with data protection regulations beyond the Council's jurisdiction and the Council cannot be held responsible for any resulting breach of those regulations.*

5) **To receive Disclosure of Interests**

None received or disclosed.

6) **To agree Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th June 2017**

The Chairman reminded the meeting that Draft Minutes are now published and available to view or download from the Coughton Parish Council website, but that anyone requiring a printed or emailed copy could request this from the clerk.

A draft having been previously distributed and published, **minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2017** were taken as read. The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were duly signed by Cllr Gittins as Chairman.

7) **To agree temporary rotation of the Chairman's role, proposed as follows:**

As part of a succession strategy, it was agreed that until the next election in 2018, a Member of the Council will stand for election as Chairman at each meeting, to chair that meeting and fulfil the legal requirement as head of the Council for a period up to and including presiding over the election of a successor, at the next full meeting.

8) **District and County Cllr's reports**

a. Cllr Rickhards reported:

- **On the school car park:** he will shortly be reviewing this ongoing issue with WCC's head of Education.
- **On traffic:** there is to be a cross-county 'Traffic Summit' this month, including a consultant's report on HGV use on the A435 and recommendations for management strategies. Consultation with stakeholders will follow.
- **On Children's Centres:** Studley's and others may be under threat as part of a re-organisation of this service. It is possible that Alcester may become the local 'hub' and that others will be closed.

b. Cllr Gittus was not present

9) **School Report**

Coughton CE Primary School Head Teacher Adam Walsh reported:

- **On Children's Centres:** the development of Alcester Children's centre as a hub may be proposed, but local school heads would prefer another location.
- **On the school car park:** it had been thought that WCC were on the verge of agreement to lease suitable land for the car park, but this is now in doubt due to a lack of funds. A proposal to apply for Academy Status, in a Church of England Schools cluster with St Nicholas Alcester and Temple Grafton, would also not provide sufficient funding to enable provision of a School Car Park and so this is not going forward at present. MP Nadhim Zahawi will be visiting school on 20th July and it is hoped that his support may be engaged. **PC Chairman John Gittins** pledged Parish Council support and will discuss this further with Adam in September.

- **On traffic:** there had been a worrying incident near the school and there is a concern that a serious road accident could impact on children's safety. He has requested that a grey barrier be erected along road/school boundaries.

10) Village Group Reports

a. Friends of the Ford

Cllr Len Carter reported a satisfactory inspection of the commissioned Ford improvement works and recommended that the submitted invoice be settled. The contractor, GMH Forestry, has done an excellent job and will provide some further maintenance. The area is already proving an appealing attraction to residents, visitors and cyclists. A press release, drafted by Cllr Gittins, was read to the meeting and approved for distribution to local papers and social media by the Clerk.

b. Flood group

Report received via the Clerk: information on the flood funding bid announcement due at the end of May was delayed by the election is now expected before summer recess.

c. Community group

Report received via the Clerk: the village Fete on Saturday 8th July at Coughton Court saw a record number of visitors and volunteers, raising £1558.00. Thanks go to Adam Walsh for opening it and to Claire Hancox and Nick Taylor at the National Trust, The Gardening Team and the many Volunteers from the NFU, National Trust and the Community for planning and organisation, as well as to everyone who made generous donations for stalls and sponsored prizes for the games. Cllr McTavish confirmed that proceeds will be distributed between local groups in the village.

d. Transport and traffic group

Report received via the Clerk: SNT North were contacted 9th July regarding road incidents (near misses, speeding, lights jumped, school end camera U/S & overgrown etc.) Speed camera revisions were requested. Traffic speed monitoring equipment is being fitted near the crossings on the A435 (& remaining for a week +), to gauge if problem is speed related and if moving the camera to the site near the school might be effective. SNT advised that motorists ignoring traffic controls should be reported to the Highways/C.Council and that Council may need to request traffic calming.

The Clerk had reported Cllr Piddington's concern from last meeting over Coughton Lane corner bollards to Cllr Rickhards. WCC Road Safety Engineer, Traffic & Road Safety Group visited to inspect but concluded no improvement was possible and that no prescribed signs would be suitable.

Cllr McTavish added that two Speed signs are missing in Sambourne Lane. Cllr Rickhards will follow this up and also the previously reported sign damage in Coughton Fields Lane. An updated map is also requested.

Meeting discussions on traffic safety strategies concluded that requests and options for minimising dangers will be deferred until after the report and consultation following the imminent Traffic Summit.

11) Planning

The Chairman noted that:

- instructions for viewing plans on the SDC website have been circulated to Cllrs by the Clerk as promised last meeting.
- planning notices, responses and weekly status updates are published on the Parish Council Website

a. New Planning Notices since last full meeting

[Coughton Lodge](#), 17/01811/VARY

Variation of condition 02 (plans condition) of planning permission 16/02251/FUL to allow a minor amendment to the design, concerning set back and windows.

19 July 2017 Supported by Coughton Parish Council

Comments due by: 1 August 2017

[14 Coughton Lane](#), 17/01593/FUL

Retrospective application for satellite dish - front wall of property

13th July 2017 - No objection by Coughton Parish Council

Status update: 14/7/17 - Pending Consideration

[2 Parkfield Cottages](#), Haydon Way 17/01473/FUL

Erection of Two Storey Side Extension

5th July 2017 Supported by Coughton Parish Council

Status update: 14/7/17 - Pending Consideration

b. Planning Decisions since last full meeting

[14 Coughton Lane](#) 17/01369/TREE

Fell Conifer & Reduce/thin Lilac; Holly; Apple trees

13 June 2017 - No objection by Coughton Parish Council

Status Update: 19/7/17 – No objection/Approved (*updated post agenda*)

[Western Power Land near Windmill Barns](#), Coughton Fields

Lane 17/01471/ELEC

13/7/1017 - Objection . electricity lines

[Throckmorton Arms, Coughton Hill](#) 17/01183/FUL

28/6/17 - Application Withdrawn

[Coughton Fields Farm, Coughton Fields Lane](#) 17/00958/LBC & 17/00958/FUL

17/5/2017 Applications withdrawn

[38 Coughton Lane](#) – no further action

Cllrs all expressed extreme disappointment at the decision of SDC regarding 38 Coughton Lane.

12) **Finance & accounts for payment**

- a. To receive RFO's Quarterly Budget update (**See the supporting document which forms part of these minutes**)

Cllrs noted and were satisfied regarding the items flagged and explained.

- b. **To receive RFO Financial Statement** as follows (Pre-view AMENDED 18/7)

Financial Summary

Bank bal c/fwd 1/6/17		14124.29
Payments received	00.00	
Less payments due out		1647.50
Balance to take forward		12,476.79

Cllrs noted and were satisfied with this summary (item 14g refers)

- c. **To agree the following Schedule Of Payments** & sign cheques accordingly

Schedule of Payments (Preview AMENDED 18/7)

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CHQ No.	EXPENSE
19-7-17	Local Council Advisory Service	200331	30.00
19-7-17	WALC (Training & resources)	200332	39.00
19-7-17	GMH Forestry (Ford works)	200333	1,272.00
19-7-17	J Pegrum (Clerk's wages/expenses)	200334	306.50

*Corrected from 304.44

The schedule was agreed by Council

- d. **To sign cheques accordingly**

Cheques duly signed by Cllrs Gittins and Carter.

13) **To receive Clerk's admin report**

The clerk reported on

- Training attended: Clerk's year; Clerk & Councillor Induction 2; Data Protection – information to be cascaded to website.
- HR Procedures initiated – HMRC registration completed & Pension registration to be investigated.
- Admin & review work completed – review & revision of most important policies & procedures completed
- Work in progress/to do – review & revision of remaining policies & procedures; risk assessment
- Good Cllrs Guide – copies purchased & distributed to Cllrs; Clerk also has a reference copy available for loan.

Members thanked the Clerk for what has been achieved to date towards completion of a major policy and procedure review and wished to minute their satisfaction with the work being done.

14) **Policies & Procedures Review**

The Chairman introduced the following draft documents for discussion, noting the necessary review of the Council's policies & procedures to ensure full compliance with the updated 'Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England 2017', which lays down what Council must do and how.

All drafts were posted for council and public preview on the website, on either (or both) the Cllr's Information page or the Council Meetings/Supplementary Documents page.

a. To review, revise & adopt **Standing Orders**

Amendments to the NALC model were discussed and a final draft agreed.

The Clerk will update the draft and make the adopted document available on a new Policies & Procedures page on the Council website.

b. To review, revise & adopt **Financial Regulations**

Amendments to the NALC model were discussed and a final draft agreed.

In particular, Regulation 2.2 requires the appointment of a Member to act as Internal Checker, working with the RFO to ensure proper practice is being followed and public funds are being managed and protected appropriately. This member will not be an authorised signatory and will be removed from the mandate. Cllr Len Carter was approved to take on this role.

The Clerk will update the draft and make the adopted document available on a new Policies & Procedures page on the Council website.

c. To agree a move to and complete **application for, Internet Banking**

(Note: Financial Regulations 6.10 & 6.15 refer)

This system change was discussed and agreed and the application form duly completed, signed by John Gittins as Chairman and Joy Pegrum as RFO. A copy of the form is attached and forms part of these minutes.

The following procedure was agreed:

The RFO will be the service administrator (Fin Reg 6.15); Online transactions of every kind will be pre-approved by two authorised signatories (either in person or via email) and evidence of this approval will form part of the Schedule Of Payments, presented and reported at each full meeting of the Council (Fin Reg 6.10).

The following steps will be written in to Financial Regulations:

- In advance of each payment being made, one signatory will be emailed with details of the proposed payment, for approval;
- that signatory will indicate approval (or otherwise) and forward the email to a second signatory.
- the second signatory will add their approval (or otherwise) and forward the same email back to the RFO.
- A digital copy of that consultation email will be retained and referenced in the Schedule of Payments at each meeting.

d. To complete new **Bank Mandate**

A new Mandate was agreed, with Cllrs Gittins, McTavish and Piddington as signatories and the form duly completed (save for two items requiring clarification from HSBC). This will be fully completed, signed and submitted as soon as possible. A copy of the form is attached and forms part of these minutes.

e. To review, revise & adopt **Code of Conduct**

An adaptation of the WALC model was discussed and adopted, although it was noted that a consultation is imminent on an amended model, for consideration in due course when available.

The Clerk will update the draft and make the adopted document available on a new Policies & Procedures page on the Council website.

f. To adopt **Transparency & Publishing Policy & Procedure**

Due to a lack of time, this policy was agreed in principle and formal adoption deferred to the next meeting.

g. To adopt **Grants Policy**

Due to a lack of time, this idea of this policy was agreed in principle and formal adoption deferred to the next meeting.

The RFO noted that current reserves seem high but that a risk assessment is needed to establish an acceptable figure going forward. This will form part of the budgeting procedure in the Autumn. In the mean time, this policy will offer a way for the community to benefit more immediately.

h. **NB - Additional Item added to Agenda:** To adopt **Communication policy**

Due to a lack of time, consideration for formal adoption of this policy was deferred to the next meeting.

15) **To approve a grant application from the Transparency Fund (via NALC) to provide computer hardware and software, in order to facilitate full compliance with the Transparency Code and its publishing commitment.**

Council is eligible to claim for a laptop, suitable software & scanner (pre-existing websites are not funded), along with some training hours and man hours for administering the online requirements.

The Application was approved.

16) **To decide appropriate action in dealing with overgrown verges and dangerous pathways/pavements (notified by Cllr Len Carter)**

It was agreed that the Clerk should take this up with land owners in the first instance, before approaching the Highways Agency.

17) **Correspondence**

- a. **To bring to the attention of Council any shared correspondence (as per the Council's Communication Policy) item for possible action or future consideration**

It was noted that a summary of all correspondence received by the Clerk is now posted on the Cllrs Information page online for consultation and comment.

Nothing was flagged for discussion.

- b. **To bring to the attention of the Council any correspondence received by individual Cllrs.**

Nothing flagged for discussion

18) **Any Other Business**

1. Councillor Vacancy

With regret, the resignation of Councillor Sophie Bayliss on 12th July was announced. Cllr Piddington expressed, on behalf of all members, Council's thanks to Sophie for her support and time given as a Parish Councillor.

The community has until 8th August to request an election for a new councillor. If no election is called, Council will seek to co-opt a new member for the remainder of the term (May 2018).

2. Clerk's contract

- a. **To confirm Clerk's appointment following end of probationary period.**
- b. **To agree requested review of contract Terms & Conditions be deferred due to pressure of other matters until her appraisal due early September.**

It was agreed that the Clerk's appointment be confirmed with the contract review to form part of the appraisal and performance review (with Chairman as per SO) to be held in September (date to be agreed).

19) **Date of next meeting:**

The next full meeting was confirmed as **20th September, 7pm, at Coughton Primary School**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.05.

..... (Chairman) Date:

RFO Quarterly Review 14/7/2017

Expense Type	June 1/4	Year to Date	Budget	Year end	Review July 2017 - Variation Notes
		2016-2017	2017-2018	2016-2017	
Admin Costs					
Clerk salary	850.50	850.50	1800.00	1810.00	Up almost 50% - Includes pay for March not accounted for in budget but set to go over budget in year
Telephone/Travelling/Office Costs	101.72	101.72	0.00	58.90	Up 100% - Nothing budgeted for this 2017/18
Aon Insurance	189.65	189.65	360.00	338.27	Down almost 50% Premium reduced following JP risk assessment
Data Protection Fee		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Internal Audit	30.00	30.00	30.00	20.00	Up £10 - New auditor appointed
External Audit		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Printing		0.00	50.00	8.00	
Playground Equipment		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Village Event		0.00	200.00	250.00	
Village Maintenance		0.00	400.00	9.99	
Stationery / Postage		0.00	50.00	0.00	
Training /Advertising for Clerk / Cllrs		0.00	50.00	0.00	
WCC School Hire	90.00	90.00	80.00	90.00	Up £10 – Under-costed in 2017/18 budget
Election		0.00	100.00	0.00	
Village Image		0.00	500.00	0.00	
Website/Internet	48.95	48.95	0.00	0.00	Up 100% - Nothing budgeted for this 2017/18
Clerk Training & Resources	70.00	70.00	0.00	0.00	Up 100% - Nothing budgeted for this 2017/18
S137	23.50	23.50	0.00	0.00	Up 100% - Nothing budgeted for this 2017/18
Build to reserves		0.00	350.00	0.00	
Total	1404.32	1404.32	3970.00	2585.16	
Subscriptions & Donations					
WALC subs	95.26	95.26	90.00	94.00	Slight Increase in cost for 2017/18
Link and Voice magazines		0.00	150.00	100.00	

Quality Status		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Churchyard Maintenance		0.00	230.00	230.00	
Village Hall		0.00	0.00	0.00	
British Legion		0.00	60.00	0.00	
		95.26	530.00	424.00	
Total Expenditure	1499.58	1499.58	4500.00	3009.16	
Village Plan sales		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Precept	2250.00	2250.00	4500.00	4500.00	
Parish Plan Steering Committee		0.00	0.00	0.00	
HM Treasury		0.00	0.00	0.00	
VAT Reclaim		0.00	0.00	0.00	
Village Community Fund	1400.00				Up 100% - Nothing budgeted for this 2017/18 but Minute 11a/May Meeting refers. Due out July/August
Total Income	3650.00	2250.00	4500.00	4500.00	
				1490.84	

