

# CODSALL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Council Meeting held remotely by Zoom in accordance to Covid-19 2020 regulations on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7.00pm following Planning

**Present: Parish Councillors:** Mrs V Chapman (Chairman), M Adams, Mrs S Adams, Mrs K Ewart, B Holland, T Jeavons, S Jenkinson, N Loftus & P Wright;

**Parish & District Councillor:** Mrs M Barrow & J Michell;

**Parish & County Councillor:** B Spencer

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Morrison.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

None

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**4. MINUTES**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be approved and signed as a true record.

**5. POLICE REPORT**

**5.1 Crime and anti-social behaviour figures for Locality 4**

Police crime and ASB report received 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

1 report of a residential burglary in Oaken Park. Two reports of vehicle crime, theft of a catalytic converter on Station Road, theft of a number plate on Sanderson Way. Criminal damage to the gate of a house on Sandy lane. A small amount of ASB, neighbour disputes or noise complaints (from Love & Liquor).

Cllr Holland raised his concerns about anti-social behaviour at Love and Liquor he advised that the Parish Council had raised its apprehensions regarding potential issues at the Planning Application stage. There appears to be a low Police presence at the moment that does not help the situation.

The Chairman Cllr Chapman said that she had concerns that Locality Four was not mentioned on any of the reports regarding crime and particularly ASB giving the impression that we are a sleepy village, she advised the meeting that she would raise this at the next Safer Neighbourhood Panel meeting and try to get the resources that are needed.

Cllr Spencer said Helen Marshall at South Staffordshire Council is our representative and tasked with addressing any issues we may have. We can ask Helen to put this as a task and for the issues to be considered under the licence agreement.

Cllr Spencer went on to say that he has been invited to Chair the Challenge Panel on Community Safety, the process at the moment on Community Safety and Neighbourhood Policing seems to be disjointed, the process is one of the things he will raise and will feedback to the Parish Council if there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Cllr Barrow is concerned over the reduction of PCSO's and visible policing.

Following comments raised on police crime figures and the monthly police reports Cllr Spencer advised that there is a back log of reporting figures as they are busy dealing with Covid-19.

Cllr Martin Adams said he had heard the back log of reporting crime figures was also down to teething problems of the new computer programme.

Cllr M Adams then went on to say that Police visibility may appear down as a result of the Police having moved out of Codsall due to the refurbishment at the Council Offices and therefore not the to-ing and fro-ing of police vehicles.

**Resolved** Cllrs Martin Adams, Chapman and Spencer will raise the issues discussed at the next Safer Neighbourhood Panel Meeting.

## 6. URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

- 6.1 Workmen schedules** – details of the Parish Council's workmen's duties and schedule of works were received and considered.
- Councillor Brian advised the meeting that he had asked for this to be put on the Agenda however what the Clerk has provided us with is just simply a list of the tasks that the workmen undertake, what I was really after was trying to get more of schedule to indicate where and when we are doing these things and what areas that we are covering for instance there is absolutely nothing happening in Codsall Wood, little happening in Oaken and so I want to take the opportunity to make sure that we are in a position to be able to tackle more because of reducing resources from our partner organisations that we are in a position to do so , but all that the Clerk has given us is simply a list of the tasks that the workmen undertake, it is not a schedule of works so to speak, so I was looking at something a bit more detailed than this to show exactly where we do the work and of course we are seeing more and more local residents starting to take on some of the work around the village and we need to make sure that we are not getting overlap that we are working with them, I saw something on the Codsall & Bilbrook pages that someone stated that they had done some work for us, so what I really wanted was a lot more detail than this on what exactly we were are doing, where we were doing it and not just simply a list of tasks that the workmen undertake, which is by no way criticism of the work that is done by the workmen it is just that I want to make sure that we are working as smartly as possible.
- The Chairman asked the Clerk to respond. The Clerk advised the meeting that the scheduling of the duties for the workmen falls under the duties of the Clerk, but if we are getting into the position where members are feeling that I am not doing the work as smartly or in the correct way then that will be a procedure that we need to go through in a different way than this evening. When the request was made for the item to be included on the Agenda it was just stated for the workmen's schedule, what I have provided the Council with is a 12 month monthly schedule of the works our workmen undertake.

The monthly tasks are broken down each Friday by the work foreman and myself based for the forthcoming week of duties based on the up and coming weather forecast and if there are additional ad hoc work that we may have to undertake, then first thing each morning before the workmen arrive, the schedule for the days duties are established dependent on the days weather, for example if we were planning to paint the planters that day but it was raining then we would schedule to do other duties on the monthly schedule, and also we may get report of some work in the village needs doing, for example recently Cllr Barrow phoned in to state that there were some brambles/hedge growing over the pavement near Birches Bridge, therefore this was then put in the schedule for the next day. Codsall has always scored highly on how neat and tidy the village looks, and the work that our workmen do to keep the village tidy this was emphasised in the lockdown in March, when our workmen could not work, the village had never looked so unkempt, that is sure an indication of what we do to keep the village tidy works.

The Clerk advised the meeting that she is unsure where this is coming from but if this is regarding poor scheduling then that falls under my remit but if the council feels that for the last eight years this is not being done correctly then this needs to be addressed in a different format.

Cllr Holland then went onto to say that he thought that he had made it pretty clear that it is not any criticism of the workmen and their work, but the idea of bringing this forward was simply to make sure that if we require to undertake work from our partner organisations then we need see what capacity we have to take on the work, and to where to direct our resources. So it is very far from what the Clerk is saying she has totally misconstrued the situation for whatever reason I just want to make sure that we are in position know what we are doing when we are doing it so that if we do need to bring addition resources then we are in a position to make sure that we are targeting the right areas.

The Clerk advised the council that work scheduling is the duty of the Clerk and our workmen work three hours a day. Their workhours are fully utilised, however as just last year when we had a clear indication of the extra work the Parish Council needed to pick up from our partner organisations this was brought to council who agreed to more work hours. Therefore, in my capacity as Clerk if we are getting in a position that the workload is getting too great then it is my duty to bring this to Council and therefore look at the resources, at the moment we are coping with the workload as far as I am concerned, however if there are certain areas that the Council feel need to be looked at these can be reported to us, as far as I am concerned as their supervisor, we still have capacity/flexibility within the schedule. Cllr Barrow - I am pleased with the workmen, only recently I reported hedge overgrowing the pavement and the workmen strimmed it back and I saw them repairing one of the village planters, I told the workman it is so lovely to see work undertaken when they are happening and not just left to deteriorate further. I must say I have always had a good response if we need to take on an extra chore.

The Chairman agreed with Cllr Barrows comments.

Cllr Holland went on to say that he is totally being misconstrued, I have said all along there is not criticism of the workmen or anything of that ilk it is just to make sure and I would like to reiterate that more duties that are required to be undertaken by us and it is just to make sure that if we are asked to do this, where we can do this where we need to be able to lead it in and make sure that we are not getting ourselves into the position that we can not cope and if we do need additional resources then we can provide them, now that was the reason for this debate but has been totally misconstrued by the Clerk as a criticism of our workmen and it is not it is for the reasons mentioned I think that they do a great job, I think that we should be in a position to at least review this as and when the time arises.

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Parish Council had already taken on extra responsibilities and we as stated took on extra man hours to accommodate the work load as we had a clear idea of what they were, if my understanding what Cllr Holland wants correctly then I find it hard to apprehend how we are going to take on extra hours or workmen if we do not know what the extra duties are going to be, and as I have already stated as my job as Clerk if we find ourselves in a position that the workload is reaching beyond our capacity then it is my duty to bring this to Council for discussion as we did previously, but surely we cannot speculate on work that could come in the future or may not come. This would be a waste of tax payers money, surely if there were any extra work this would not be suddenly dumped on us without time to prepare, it will slowly increase allowing us to put capacity in place, therefore we should surely be waiting to see what the extra work would be and the implications that would mean on us and our staff.

Cllr Spencer felt that we should try to find a compromise to go forward as we have hit a few nerves maybe we can just ease our way through, I sense what Brian is saying is there some form of forward planner so we know what roughly what work we have done, there may be gaps in it, this is not a criticism we accept and I am one of those who have asked for additional work to be done here and there, would Cllr Holland be happy a loose forward planner.

The Clerk advised that what she felt was sent out to Cllrs was a loose plan, she did advise that she could break that monthly planner down weekly and daily but that can alter daily as our workmen work outside.

The Chairman advised that you are doing a good job is supervising the schedule of work with the workmen but if we need to send our workmen to other jobs then how we manage this and I do not see it as a criticism of you at all.

Cllr Michell is it not simple that if we are faced with a decision by other partners to take on a particular job or a particular footpath then we consult with the Clerk as to what capacity we have and that she carries on managing the workmen the way she has been in a very professional manor. I get the impression that our workmen are ever so willing and enthusiastic, it is working well if it isn't broke why fix it.

If we are looking at additional jobs just ask the Clerk and I am sure she has a very good idea of whether we have spare capacity or not and likewise if she feels that she needs more help of the lads are under strain I am sure she will come to Council, I cannot see giving the men more time sheets to fill out and analysing their work is very productive it is better they get on with their job of litter picking and keeping the village tidy.

**Resolved** if there are any additional responsibilities that our partners ask the Parish Council's to undertake then this will be brought to council to discuss on how that would be managed.

**6.2 Russell House Surgery** – Cllr Wright brought the meetings attention to the concerns raised to him by residents regarding appointment and waiting times. The residents raised concerns were:

- They found it is difficult to book an appointment by telephone. You call at 8am when they open and have to hang on until at least 8.20 before you get to speak to someone.
- How many Doctors are there, they always appear to have a locum and you never seem to get the same Doctor twice.
- When will G.P's start seeing people in person again.
- You cannot make appointments to speak about blood test, there experience is that you have to book four weeks in advance for a test.

Cllr Barrow advised that the practice will be moving to South Staffordshire Council within 2 years and the practise will be expanding providing more capacity.

Cllr Holland asked, as the village grows with the new housing developments can the surgeries cope with extra patients.

Cllr Spencer advised that for the resident to use the CCG complaint process; as a Parish Council we are limited in what we can do, and as it is outside our jurisdiction we are unable solve the problem.

Cllr Sue Adams advised that the doctors surgery website advises patients to call at 9.30 for blood tests.

Cllr Chapman wished it to be recorded that the Parish Council has no concerns or issues with Russell House Surgery.

**Resolved** that Cllr Wright would advise the resident to write a polite letter highlighting their concerns to the Doctors Surgeries Practice Manager.

**6.3 Neighbourhood Plan** – the way forward with the Neighbourhood Plan was considered.

**Resolved** the Clerk gave an update of where we are to date and the meeting agreed that due to Covid-19 measures holding Neighbourhood Plan Committee meetings at this moment would be inappropriate and not everyone would be equipped for Zoom meetings.

**6.4 Notification by Members of Codsall Parish Council: Register of Members' Acceptance of Gift(s)/Hospitality** - notification for completion if applicable was, **received and noted.**

**6.5 Notification by Members of Codsall Parish Council of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests** – reminder to members to consider if any changes are required to their notifications. **Matter of report.**

**6.6 Policies & Procedures review** –consideration was given for any revisions to the following Policy documents:

- 6.6.1** (2) Model Publication Scheme
- 6.6.2** (9) Retention of Documents
- 6.6.3** (11) Health & Safety Policy
- 6.6.4** (13) Strategy Document
- 6.6.5** (16) Grant Policy and Request Form
- 6.6.6** (18) Complaints Procedure

**Resolved** approval and adoption of the draft revised documents.

**6.7 Flood Forum** – an update from the Flood Forum was received. Cllr Spencer advised that the forum is going well. The main concerns at the moment are Wood Road and Birches Road. Work is now scheduled for repair on a cracked drain on Birches Road. Based on the flood questionnaires received back from residents of problem spots within Codsall and Bilbrook there is now a Section 19 report which means more funding is available for repair works. Cllr Spencer wished to thank all those involved with distributing the leaflets.

## 7. ACCOUNTS

**7.1 Resolved** a report on Council Finances for year to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 be approved.

**7.2 Resolved** the schedule of payments up to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be approved.

**7.3** Confirmation by the Chairman of the authorisation of the Clerks time sheet.  
**Matter of report.**

## 8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

A report from County Councillor Bob Spencer.

Coronavirus infection in the Staffordshire area is high. South Staffordshire is even higher, even if you take out the cases from the prisons. He is not sure where the infections are coming from. There is nothing really that the Parish Council can do. More testing, more results, testing in South Staffordshire is quite high. Encourage as many people as possible about the importance of 'Hands, Face, Space' and the need to wear face coverings, wash your hands regularly or use hand sanitiser, and to maintain a safe social distance. These measures are vital to ensure people feel safe and to slow the spread of coronavirus in the district.

## 9. CODSALL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CVHMC)

The minutes of C.V.H.M.C. meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 were **received and noted.**

## 10. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

A verbal report from District Councillors.

- Cllr Chapman came away from South Staffordshire Council Locality meeting feeling a little flat with changes to the method of working and how we integrate in the future.
- Cllr Barrow could not quite understand the purpose of the roles, she felt that the current way of communicating to relevant departments works well, the suggested changes seems to have added an additional barrier.
- Cllr Michell thought would be best to raise concerns through the meeting with the CEO Dave Hayward.

- Cllr Barrow said she is Chairing the Challenge Panel on Business Support – encourage via Parish Council Business Plan.
- South Staffordshire Council are utilising their staff and redeploying them temporarily to help with Covid-19.

**11. Councillors and Clerks Written Report**

A written report was **received and noted**.

**12. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE**

**12.1 Grant request – Codsall Village Hall** – an email thanking the Parish Council for the grant received was **received and noted**.

**13. Items for future** - Each Councillor may use this opportunity to report on matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.

Councillors should note that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making:

- Cllr Michell said highways footpath number 13 on Hushpins Lane has a keep out sign on the gate next to the style, also the footpath sign has disappeared. Need to discuss the need to walk it or we could lose it.
- The track on Oaken Drive needs to be re-stoned.
- Citizens Award presentation.
- The Parish Council is not 'blowing its own trumpet', need to discuss how to improve publicity for what we do.
- Agenda format.

**14. HIGHWAY ISSUES**

Cllr Spencer said there is a large pothole at the top of Shop Lane. He would like to encourage everyone if they see any potholes to report them on Staffordshire County Council website or via the Parish Council, he will then chase those reports up. This method has been proven to be more successful in getting the issues resolved.

Cllr Jenkinson replied the pothole on Shop Lane had a white line painted around it, the pothole has now increased in size beyond the white line.

**NEXT MEETING**

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

[Meeting closed 8.25pm]