

Cowley (& Birdlip) Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs. E. Lavington | 07941258052 | cowleypc@hotmail.co.uk

MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20th October 2021 at St Mary's Church Birdlip 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs. Julian Lavington, Eileen McKay, Peter Ritchie, Dawn Collings, Paul Vogel, Linda Dawson
And District Councillor Julia Judd and 27 members of the public.

- 1. Apologies** received from Cllr Tim Knox.
- 2. Minutes of last meeting** Signed
- 3. Declarations of Interest** None
- 4. Matters arising not included as an agenda item**

The Clerk reported Cllr Knox had asked to acquire a new dog bin for Cowley. Although this has already been budgeted, we are currently unable to order or install until there is sufficient space available on the refuse collections for emptying. Clerk confirmed that this is still the situation with the new bin to be provided on the road to Barrow Wake. Clerk will provide updates as and when received.

Community Speedwatch. The Clerk reported the new gun has been used on a number of occasions and has caught many speeding vehicles entering Birdlip from the A417, some in excess of 50MPH. Warning letters have been sent by the Police.

- 5. Bus Shelters & defibrillators:** To note that the 3 bus shelters, defibrillators and kiosks have been inspected since the last meeting. Noted.

- 6. Winter Maintenance Planning**

Cllr Collings confirmed discussion with Birdlip residents are still on going.

- 7. Birdlip Verge and Fingerpost Sign**

The Clerk confirmed County Cllr Joe Harris had confirmed he was happy to award a grant towards the cost of the heritage fingerpost sign. The Deputy Highways Manger has also confirmed he will arrange for the old signs to be removed and the heritage sign installed once purchased and is currently looking into cost etc on the Parish Councils behalf.

- 8. Update Barrow Wake Car Park Working Group**

The Clerk confirmed she had attended a virtual meeting of the working group. They are currently putting together ideas for solutions to tackle the anti-social behaviour at the view point. These include but are not limited to, closing the car park at regular times, cctv cameras and reducing the number of parking spaces. The suggestions will eventually be put forward for consultation.

- 9. Planning**

Ref. No: 21/03639/FUL Loft conversion with installation of conservation Velux windows to front and rear elevations Buckingham House Birdlip Gloucester Gloucestershire GL4 8JH **Supported**

Ref. No: 21/00503/LBC and Ref. No: 21/00502/FUL Free-standing new-build pavilion for 4 new family guest bedrooms set within the unused NW Courtyard Terrace (Former Swimming Pool) Cowley Manor Cowley Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL53 9NL **Supported**

10. A417 Update

The Chairman reported that a lot had been happening in the last month.

An update on the forthcoming examination of the A417 DCO by the planning inspectorate. The rule 6 letter has been issued and preliminary meeting will take place on the 2nd November. The process which will end with a decision and concludes on the 16th May 2022. The Planning Inspectorate has asked the PC in conjunction with National Highways to Produce a Statement of Common Ground by 14th December. A draft will be shared with all Councillors for input.

Cllr Dawson asked why some issues with Cowley had not been referred to. Cllr Lavington explained that the representation was submitted using the final statement produced by all Councilors, but any outstanding matters raised for Cowley had been addressed by NH in the DCO submission. He explained that if as Parish Council we wish to challenge the substance of any part of the DCO we must provide evidence in support and this would have to be indemnified by a professional body or we could be liable for costs.

There have been reports of an increase in rat running traffic through the villages of Birdlip and Brimpsfield. On three occasions Birdlip village was gridlocked with diversion traffic which resulted in a lorry full of raw chicken meat spilling onto the road and left for 24 hours before a cleanup crew arrived.

Another very nasty accident on the dangerous section of road between the Stockwell and Birdlip turn offs in which an air ambulance was in attendance.

And again a gridlocked village after a diesel spill closed the A417 in both directions.

A meeting with National Trust on Supporting each other on Designated funds was attended by Cllr Lavington and Cllr Dawson. This included discussions regarding the anti-social behaviour at Barrow Wake which raised concerns regarding this possibly moving to the Stockwell turn off or into Birdlip Village.

Designated funds application totaling approx. £720,000 has now been submitted which includes applications from groups that contacted the Parish Council these being Birdlip and Brimpsfield Cricket Club, Birdlip Village Hall Trustees, Brimpsfield with Birdlip PCC. Also applications for grants and land for both a Childrens playground and allotments in Birdlip, reduced speed on the B4070 and a pedestrian crossing. Cllr Dawson stated she was unaware of this fund. Cllr Lavington confirmed that it had been discussed at many meetings and that there had been a suggestion at one point that Cowley Cricket Club may apply but no applications had been received from Councillors on behalf of Cowley village. Cllr Vogel confirmed this. Clerk also stated it had been minuted on many occasions.

For reference, please see Minutes from previous meetings:

16th January 2019 Item 5

15th May 2019 Item 9 (ii)

19th June 2019 Item 11

17th March 2021 Item 7

A Social Media post on Facebook outlining the campaign plans of a "Stop Route 30" WhatsApp group formed by some residents in Cowley, had been seen by the residents of Birdlip. This had prompted a "Birdlip Villagers meeting" which the Chairman was asked to attend and explain the current situation on the process of the A417 Missing Link Scheme.

The Chairman stated that following this he had been overwhelmed with emails of support for Route 30 not just from Birdlip residents but also residents of Cowley who want the Parish Council to know that they are fully supportive of the route 30 scheme which they believe has been handled impeccably by National Highways and is needed asap to stop the death toll rising and ultimately will be a god send for everyone.

In response to this campaign group a petition in support of Route 30 had been raised. Cllr Collings had been asked by local residents to present the petition containing 243 signatures.

The petition was accepted on behalf of Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP by Cllr Judd.

A member of the public stated that the "Stop Route 30" group was not trying to stop improvements to the missing link scheme but believed there was a better option. The Chairman invited the group to write to the Parish Council outlining the alternative option. Cllr Ritchie stated that he was aware of their preferred option and it was option 12 which would bring the road even closer to the village of Birdlip than it already is and this was simply unacceptable.

A member of the public stated that he and the people of Birdlip had had enough of people wanting to campaign against or stop the A417 missing link Route 30 going ahead. He stated that this route falls between the village of Birdlip and the Village of Cowley and both villages would be impacted equally.

A member of the public wished to state that she was one of the many families that had sadly lost someone in a deadly accident along this stretch of road and something had to be done as a matter of urgency to ensure no more families have to suffer needlessly.

Another member of the public raised concerns regarding the pollution within the village of Birdlip and specifically the school. Route 12 is unacceptable as it would have a devastating impact bringing the road even closer to the village of Birdlip and the school.

11. Defibrillator Cabinet Public Access

Cllr Ritchie had spoken to South West Ambulance and it had been advised that there had been only one theft from an unlocked cabinet throughout the South West in the past 5 years and the balance of risk favours having it unlocked.

Community Heartbeat trust had confirmed that the faceplate would have to be replaced if it was to remain unlocked and it was suggested that the access code be displayed above the box.

The question of Insurance was raised and the Clerk was asked to check the situation with the insurance company and email details to Councillors.

After much discussion, it was decided that a decision would be made via emails once the Clerk had received the information from the insurance company.

12. VETS scheme

Stuart Drysdale spoke explaining that Jo Pearce had kindly looked into this scheme.

Volunteer Emergency Telephone Service (VETS) is a scheme whereby a village or community can have approx. 10 volunteers who are willing to be telephoned to help a neighbour in a crisis such as a cardiac arrest. A person can phone the specific VETS number and the system will dial each volunteer until someone can answer and help. A person can also ask to be put through to the VETS number when they dial 999 to request an ambulance. The VETS number uses a local dialing code, and they try to assign it a memorable number.

This system is especially helpful for those who are on their own at home, or if there are two people at home but one needs to perform CPR or medical assistance to the other whilst a volunteer gets the defib etc. A second volunteer can also be phoned on the system to come and help with CPR until the emergency services arrive.

The initial cost of setting up the scheme would be £345.00 then £100 annual charge thereafter.

Following much discussion, the Chairman stated he believed that it was not a large sum of money and suggested a vote to, in the first instance, look at budgeting the cost for Cowley village at the annual budget review in January and canvas the villagers of Birdlip regarding their thoughts on the scheme for their village.

This was unanimously voted on and carried.

13. Finance

I) To note 2nd Precept Payment of £1269.00 had been received.

II) To note cancellation of and new cheque issued: Mark Taylor - Phonebox Painting and Bench Installation. £454.98 Noted

III) To agree the Clerk's pay and expenses and issue cheques £160.64 & £26.00

IV) To add Cllr Vogel to Bank Signatories This item would be put on the next agenda as two full signatories were needed and was unable to sign in Cllr Knox absence.

14. To take any questions from the public

Cllr Judd asked the Parish Council to consider Electric charging points when applying for designated funds. She reminded residents that they can report Fly Tipping and Potholes and missed waste collections online via the CDC website. GCC and the woodlands trust are providing trees for planting if you know of any suitable space please apply. You can now apply for funds towards the Queens Jubilee.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding cyclists using the woods in Birdlip. They had used threatening behaviour and had told one resident that they would kill their dog. The Chairman asked that anyone who experienced this threatening behaviour to contact the police and asked the Clerk to write to the local PCSO on behalf of the Parish Council.

15. Items for the next agenda Budget update, Donation Policy, Suggested meeting dates for 2022

16. Date of meeting Wednesday 17th November Deer Park Guide HQ Cowley at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9pm

Signed..... Date.....