**Minutes of Coldridge Parish Council Meeting 19.30 on Thursday January 18th 2024**

**Present:** **Councillors** Andrew Green, John Smith, Marion Born, John Quick, Malcolm Bedford, Ivan Kriznik

**Clerk** Keyth Richardson

**Apologies:** Chris Burrows **MDDC Councillors** Natalia Letch & Stuart Penny **DCC Councillor** Margaret Squires

One member of the public was present.

**Open Forum**

Thanks were given to the Parish Council for arranging the finance and organising the repairs to the clock.

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| 2023/24-72 | **Welcome by Chairman** | Andrew Green welcomed all to the meeting |
| 2023/24-73 | **Recording of meetings** | no-one was recording the meeting |
| 2023/24-74 | **Apologies** | Apologies had been received from Cllr Chris Burrows **MDDC Cllrs** Natalia Letch & Stuart Penny **DCC Councillor** Margaret Squires |
| 2023/24-75 | **Declarations of interest** | None reported. |
| 2023/24-76 | **Minutes** | The minutes of the meeting on November 18th, were approved and signed |
| 2023/24-77 | **Matters arising not appearing on the agenda** | St Matthew’s Parish Church and Allerbridge Chapel had both sent thank-you notes for the donations. |
| 2023/24-78 | **To agree a Precept and Budget for 2024/2025** | The clerk produced a revised budget for 2024/25 which after some discussion was agreed by the Council. It shows a surplus of about £1000, which coupled to the expected carried forward figure of £3000 gives the Council a fair reserve in case of unexpected issues. The Council agreed to set a precept of £5,000.  It was noted that the Village Halll may be seeking help to cover its Business Rates Bill once this is known, and that the War Memorial may need work in 2025 to mark the 80th anniversaries of both VE and VJ days. |
| 2023/24-79 | **Report on John Hart meeting 14 Dec** | The Chairman attended this on the date, and the Clerk watched the recording later.  Main points of relevance are that DCC spend most of its total budget of £696 million, on Adult and Young People’s care, £550 million. It spends £9m on bus passes and £6.9m on road repairs; £862 per mile of road. DCC is reducing the use of 3rd parties and taking more of the care provision in-house to give it more control on a day-to-day basis. There is still a wish from DCC for District, Town and Parish Councils to take over some of DCC responsibilities but with no financial support to do so. |
| 2023/24-80 | **Coldridge Village Noticeboard repairs** | The work for the Village Green noticeboard is in hand but is being affected by the weather. When the noticeboard is out of action some use can be made of the church noticeboard. Malcolm Bedford has purchased some oak from Winkleigh Timber and is working on this with Trevor Mckown. |
| 2023/24-81 | **Closure of DCC mobile library** | John Smith, who has taken on a leading role in the county wide campaign gave a full update.  **LEGAL CHALLENGE NEWS UPDATE**  Concerning our campaign to Save Devon’s Mobile Libraries, we are very pleased to report that our Legal Challenge against Devon County Council’s decision to close our mobile library service is now issued in the High Court.  All of the relevant witness statements and supporting documents were lodged at Court on Friday, 12th January, and it was confirmed on Monday, 15th that it has all been properly processed. We now need to see if a High Court judge orders the Injunction Hearing within the next couple of weeks.  We appreciate that the process may appear to be a little slow. However, just as with the Post Office Scandal, every little detail must be minutely examined and correctly submitted and judged. No room for short-cuts or guesswork. Please note that, for the time being, our Mobile Libraries will continue to visit our communities right up to the end of February (1st and 29th in the case of Coldridge).  It is our earnest hope that the injunction hearing is granted and that it is successful in halting the decommissioning of this critically valuable community service.  There are still some in DCC who think that alternatives such as on-line books, community libraries in local areas, and volunteers driving to the urban libraries on behalf of neighbours are viable alternatives, a view which needs to be constantly challenged. |
| 2023/24-82 | **Church Clock update** | The appeal for funds to repair the church clock had exceeded the final bill, so there was no need to draw on any of the Parish precept. The work has been completed and all agreed it was a great success. The chairman commented that by seeking to obtain best value for the public money being spent, and by looking around for alternatives the total cost was less than half the original quote but still of the same quality.  The following public thank you note will be published on What’s on in Coldridge Facebook page and sent out via the Coldridge Calendar circulation list.  *St Matthew’s Church Clock*  *Coldridge Parish Council thank all of those who contributed to the crowdfunding appeal, the ladies who organise the Coldridge Cafe and two anonymous donors for their support. Thanks also to those in the community who gave their time to ensure the clock is back and working again. It really is the beating heart of the village, and those living near it have missed its reassuring chimes. It can also be seen, and sometimes heard, from many parts of the parish, especially whilst it is lit up over Christmas and New Year.* |
| 2023/24-83 | **Tree pruning on the Village Green** | Following the approach from Western Power Distribution to have their contractors, Hi-Line, trim the beech tree, which could not be done without destroying its essential character the Clerk asked WPD to route the cable underground. A decision is still being waited for but the work to trim the tree has been taken off the job list. |
| 2023/24-84 | **NALC session on the use of social media.** | Ivan has booked a place on this, Feb 28th at 12:00 – 13:15. If any other Councillors wish to join him, please let him know. |
| 2023/24-85 | **D-Day 80th 6/6/2024** | This is on a Thursday,  The beacon lighting will take place nationally at 21:15. As Chris Burrows will not be available a replacement is required and also agreement obtained from the Manager of Coldridge Barton. It was agreed in principle that the Parish would take part, most likely with a BBQ at a price to cover costs and not lose money and Marion Born and Keyth Richardson will work with the VH Social group on this. It was agreed not to purchase a lantern for £55, nor to serve fish and chips as suggested by the national organiser. |
| 2023/24-86 | **Mid-devon Mobility support** | It was agreed that the only support which could be given was the £200 in the budget. The Clerk was asked to produce a short item explaining how this scheme works and once agreed by the Council it can be distributed throughout the Parish. |
| 2023/24-87 | **Finance** | The following payments were agreed.   1. clerk’s wages £216.36 2. Tax on clerk’s wages £43.40 3. clerk’s expenses  £3.98 4. John Smith for tree lights £24.00 5. David Clake for work on the clock £1,150.00 6. Brian Perry for work on the clock £1,150.00 |
| 2023/24-88 | **Planning** | There were no new applications and the ones for Clotworthy Farm had all been approved. |
| 2023/24-89 | **Highways** | The issues of Frogbury Cross have been addressed to some extent, and it was agreed that whilst this is still a work in progress no further action would be taken at present.  C&R Construction signs. Whilst some have gone up this week they are not quite what was agreed with C&R. A site visit to see these will be done and if further signs are needed then C&R will be approached.  Whilst it is noted that some work has been carried out to cut back the banks on the B3220 to expose the drains it has not solved the problem of flooding. Are there still some drains hidden in the banks which is why the flooding is still there at Gilscott?  The current cleaning regime for the drains in Church Lane from Long Parks down to Church Lane Cross is not effective as the drains are blocked up, some of which is gravel from resurfacing work which was not cleared up by the contactors, thus creating a problem for the drains.  Ivan Krisnik will follow these issues up with Stephen Tucker of DCC Highways |
| 2023/24-90 | **Councillor’s reports** | Nothing to add to what is above. |
| 2023/24-91 | **Date of next meeting** | The dates are March 21st May 9th July 18th Sept 19th Nov 21st |

The meeting closed at 21.00

Signed: