

# **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

## **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 – 7.30pm Methodist Church Hall, Back Lane**

### **1. Introduction and welcome**

Welcome everyone who has kindly taken the time to attend this Annual Parish Meeting tonight which is an opportunity for myself as Chair of the Parish Council and Sue Grant the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to report on the work of the Parish Council in the previous year and outline our priorities for 2025/2026.

The Annual Parish meeting is also intended for Colsterworth and District residents to raise any issues they have for the Parish Council to consider.

The APM is also an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge those people in the community who give so much of their time to benefit the community, and I am pleased to welcome our speakers tonight.

### **2. To Approve the Minutes of meeting held Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

The minutes of the Parish Meeting of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2024 were agreed and duly signed.

### **3. Chairman's Annual Report**

#### **CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

First, I want to say a special thank you to Sue who has supported all Councillors and Parishioners to ensure that the Council carries out its duties *within the resources provided by the annual precept and other incomes*. For 2024/2025 we have again received a favourable internal and external audit report providing assurances to our Parishioners of a properly and efficiently run Council.

I would like to thank Kevin and Mark our Community Cleaners who continue to provide a first-class service.

I must also take this opportunity of acknowledging the sad loss of Cllr Ken Vickers - our thoughts remain with his family and friends. He will be missed.

It is fitting therefore, that I pay a tribute to all our Councillors - who are volunteers and give their time freely - to support and represent the interests of all the villages in our Parish.

We currently have four vacancies in our three wards – one at North Witham and Lobthorpe, two at Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe and one at Gunby and Stainby.

I must also thank our District Councillors, David Bellamy and Ben Green who have provided this Parish with support and advice along with our County Councillor Charlotte Vernon.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would particularly like to acknowledge all the time, effort, enthusiasm and stamina of all the volunteers who invest in this community including: -

- Volunteer Litter pickers.
- Nature Trail volunteers
- “In Touch” volunteers delivering to every household in the Parish and in particular our In Touch Editor, Stuart Whitcombe

Having looked back on last year’s report and the priorities we set, I can report on some headline achievements:

**The War Memorial Restoration Project**

It was back in February 2019 when the then Cllr Mark Ramage put the restoration of the War Memorial on the Parish Council agenda due to the rapid deterioration and the need to identify the extent and costs of any restoration work. Cllr Ramage was successful in securing funding from SKDC and the War Memorial Trust for professional fees to be able to carry out this preliminary work.

Covid, change in professional personnel involved and lack of funding delayed the work but in March 2023 and as a joint venture with the community, including the Colsterworth Festival of Remembrance (CFoR) the Parish Council secured and accepted a substantial grant from FCC Communities Foundation that led to the Parish Council agreeing to commission the restoration work.

The whole community, individuals and local businesses supported the events and fundraising to cover the total project costs amounting to just under £38,000 and made this significant project possible and which was time limited due to the expiry in October 2024 of the Planning Permissions granted by SKDC for the schedule of works on this Grade II listed memorial.

The work was completed on 14 September 2024 – I must acknowledge the huge amount of work that Sue personally put into this project on behalf of the Parish Council and all those involved in addition to her routine work looking after this Parish.

Finally, the Parish Council secured a grant of £1,700 from SKDC, for a lectern style information board to be installed to acknowledge the importance of this memorial to our community and its heritage and acknowledge all of those who contributed to the success of the Project.

Particular thanks go to Margaret Winn and Cllrs Colin Russell for their tenacity and attention to detail in putting together the photos, images and text – who along with Cllr Anna Bouvie recommended the best location for the information board to be installed.

**The replacement bench on the Nature Trail known as ‘Jane’s Bench’, was purchased with £250 Grant from the Rotary Club and £514.28 raised by the Nature Trail fund raising quiz night and book sale.** The bench was installed by the Nature Trail volunteers and a fitting tribute to Jane Ostler who has given so much time and shared her knowledge both on the Nature Trail and as for many years having a regular article in the In Touch Parish Newsletter

### **Verge Grass Cutting Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth**

It was agreed to increase the verge grass cutting from 7 to 10 times a year to keep the village verges looking neat and tidy.

### **PLANNING**

Whilst we are not the Planning Authority there have been some challenges in relation to planning applications in the Parish. We have an engaged and involved community who continue to look to the Parish Council to represent their best interests.

- This past year the plans for an Anaerobic Digester plant at Gunby was refused by the SKDC Planning Committee and we anticipate an appeal.
- A development on land off Bourne Road for five houses was also refused; this has just been re-submitted with changes as a result of the representations made.

We also engaged with the SKDC Local Plan Review, particularly relating to housing allocations; however, due to the change in Government last year this will be re-visited in July 2025 when a revised plan will be out for consultation.

Looking forward to 2025/2026, we will continue to identify our priorities including:

- Emergency Plan review (particularly in relation to flooding)
- Formal review of traffic issues e.g., Community Speed watch, road signage and issues around Colsterworth, e.g., High Street, Colster Way with the County Council and also engage with the consultations on the planned developments on the A1
- Review of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Extension of the Old Post Lane Cemetery
- Repainting of some of the children's play equipment on Colster Way and weather treating the benches on inside the children's play area and the ones on Old Post Lane play area.

I'll hand over to Sue now for the financial report ....

### **Colsterworth Community Orchard Grant from SKDC**

Nine fruit trees were planted on Colster Way playing field along with two wooden name plates "Colsterworth Parish Council Coronation Community Orchard".

### **Colsterworth Parochial Church Council Grant Request for repairs to the St John the Baptist Church Clock**

The Parish Council were pleased to support the Grant application of £1,000 towards the church clock repair by re-allocating the £1,000 earmarked for the Newton Project which the PCC has had to cancel.

## **4. Clerk's Financial Report**

The SCRIBE Accounting Parish Council software package continues to provide the Parish Council with a robust transparent accounting system with reports extracted from SCRIBE.

Bank accounts are reconciled and approved monthly.

- The Finance and Administration Committee meet twice yearly.
  - October includes Budget Setting which was agreed and recommended to full Council.
  - April for End of Year accounts and external audit.
- Internal Audit is undertaken twice yearly by an independent auditor.
- Councillor Hainsworth continues to have view only access to the Parish Council bank accounts.

### **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/2024**

- The Annual Governance and Accountability Report dated 21/08/2024 for 2023/2024 had no findings.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/2025 is due by 01/07/2025.

Internal Auditor is scheduled to complete the Internal Auditors Report on 24th April 2025.

The Statement of Accounts were handed out to the persons present and are uploaded on to the website.

Bank Balances at 31/03/25.

- Community Account £7,354.65
- Community Savings Account £54,078.16
- Total £ 61,432.81

**Total Receipts for 2024/2025 = £94,856.72 (Excl VAT) £105,774.41 (Inci VAT)**

### **Increase on receipts for 2024/2025 due to the following.**

Accumulative budgeted receipts of £88,912.78 actual receipts £94,856.72. Receipts difference mainly due to: -

#### **1. War Memorial Restoration Project Contingency and Professional Fees costs. Grant income Received of: -**

£1,329.25 Balfour Beatty contribution to Contingency costs.  
£1,407.35 CFoR Funds raised for professional fees.

**2. Lecturn Style Information Board on the WM Restoration Grant: -**  
£1,700.00 from SKDC Prosperity Fund for the War Memorial restoration lercturn style Information Board.

**3. Jane's Bench Replacement – Nature Trail**  
£514.28 Nature Trail fund raising from quiz night and book sale.

**4. Colsterworth Community Orchard Grant from SKDC**  
£366.50 Grant from SKDC

**5. Bank Investment Interest**  
£630.29 HSBC Interest Rates are variable and difficult to budget for.

---

**Total Payments for 2024/2025 = £91,054.42 (Excl VAT) £100,634.45 (Incl VAT)**

Accumulative budgeted payments £92,617.81 actual payments £91,054.42.

### **In Touch Magazine costs**

The Parish Council continue to supplement the Parish Magazine costs as a community communication tool.

### **6. Internal Audit**

**£345.00 Increase** costs due to change of auditor midway through 2023/2024 invoiced for in May 2024. It was not possible to budget for this unexpected change.

### **7. CHT Defibrillators**

**£460.90** Budget figure for 2024/2025 was set as an average of the previous three years. An additional battery was replaced.

### **8. LCC Grass Cutting**

**£375.00** The Parish Council supplements the Grant received from the LCC Parish Grass Cutting agreement with extra cuts to keep the grass verges neat and tidy.

### **Policies for Updating**

CAD are regularly reviewed and recommended to full Council for adoption. All Policies and be found on the Council website on the following link <https://colsterworth.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business>.

### **5. Colsterworth Festival of Remembrance update by David Heath-French.**

Apologies received from David Heath French due to work commitments.

### **6. Nature Trail update by Mo Taylor**

My update is not vastly different from the previous year. The volunteers are great and do whatever is asked of them. A new path has been created at the West End of the Nature Trail.

The volunteers help the Butterfly Conservation team at Twyford Wood twice a year.

They also joined Graham Keily for his regular A1 Fly over litter pick which was also supported by the A1 Truck Stop providing refreshments.

Soon the volunteers will be helping to re-paint the church railings of St John the Baptist Church.

Numbers of volunteers has grown, and recruitment of volunteers has been paused.

Thank you to the Parish Council who continue to support the Nature Trail.

Boothby Pagnel Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) have donated trees to the Nature Trail and invited the Volunteers to spend a day with them in June.

A considerable anonymous donation was received towards the replacement 'Jane's Bench'. The quiz night at the White Lion and the Rotary Club grant made up the rest of the funds to purchase the bench.

A resident recently donated some funds which tools were purchased with. The Nature Trail currently holds fund from the Frederick Ingle Trust towards an Interpretation Board. The cost of one of these boards was not fully understood at the time and we will approach the Frederick Ingle Trust to see if they are willing to support another initiative.

### **7. Update on the St John the Baptist Church by Peter Wheatley (Church Warden).**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak regarding the church and I would like to personally thank the Parish Council for the grant towards repairing the Church Clock.

There are three areas that I will speak about: –

#### **Church Building** - Origins 800AD, older than Lincoln Cathedral

Building evolved, now Grade 1 Listed – mixed blessing – e.g. clock.

Isaac Newton Connection

The Newton Project was abandoned due to the scale of the project.

Quinquennial – Ongoing maintenance, Chancel Roof, inside walls, heating

Churchyard – SKDC are responsible for the Churchyard because it is a closed cemetery. They generally do a good job grass cutting but have not cut the Yew Trees for several years despite our requests.

Cemetery - Thank you to the volunteers who regularly cut the grass in the cemetery.

#### **Worship** - Sunday services continue weekly.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals can be arranged.

Special Services – Remembrance Sunday and VE Day.

Congregation – Target to maintain, there has been a small increase.

Vicar – No Vicar has yet been appointed to replace Reverend Neil Griffiths.

The Church is open daily.

#### **Community Involvement** - Refugees/Needs, Foodbank, Ukraine clothes,

School – Cards, Services, Governor,

Social – Plant Sales/ coffee

Hosted the War Memorial opening refreshments.

Concerts and the annual Christmas Tree Festival.

Thank you to the non-Church volunteers.

In Summary the church is in a good situation, with willing volunteers and keen to support village.

We need to recognise our limitations – We are a small aging congregation.  
Remember only as good as last event!

**8. Any Motions by Electors (must be proposed 10 days before the Annual Parish Meeting)**

**9. Any other business**

A resident suggested that the paths on the Nature Trail are sign posted.

A resident appreciated the recent re-painting of the children's play equipment on Colster Way but was disappointed it had been done during some of the recent school holidays. The Clerk advised that they had requested the contractor did not carry out the work during the school holiday but unfortunately, they did. Perhaps taking the opportunity during the recent good weather.

**The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.**

**Signed:**

**Chairperson**

**Date:**