

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021 - 7.00 pm Colsterworth Village Hall**

**Present**

Councillor Caroline Hainsworth (Chairman), Sue Grant (Parish Clerk) and 11 parishioners.

**1. Introduction and Welcome**

The Chairman Caroline Hainsworth welcomed all to the meeting.

**2. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

The minutes of the Parish Meeting of the 18th April 2019 agreed and duly signed.

**3. Chairman's Annual Report**

Annual Report of the Chairman of Colsterworth and District Parish Council. Councillor (Cllr) Mrs. Caroline Hainsworth thanked all that attended the meeting, particularly so in person at the Village Hall as restrictions are slowly lifted due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) explained that some of the meeting's reports reflected on 2019 as well as 2020 as it was not possible to hold the Annual Parish Meeting in 2019 due to the restrictions of the Pandemic.

Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) explained that this was an important meeting which provides an opportunity for herself as Chair of the Parish Council and Sue Grant the Parish Clerk to outline the work of the Parish Council but mainly the meeting was for Colsterworth and District residents to discuss Parish affairs. Cllr Hainsworth reported that the meeting was also to celebrate and acknowledge those people who gave so much of their time and effort for the Community. Cllr Hainsworth reflected that 2020 had been a particularly challenging and testing period for not only the Parish Council, but the community and country due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. As a result of the pandemic the Parish Council could not hold face to face meetings but with the use of Zoom technology, they were able to continue with Parish Council Business.

Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) thanked Sue the Parish Clerk for her persistence and patience to support Councillors and others to fully participate as it was quite a steep learning curve for all. She also explained that it was necessary due to the legislation governing Councils that Special Measures were put in place and she was pleased to report that the Internal Auditor noted:-

***“There continues to be clear evidence of finance and governance of procedures that should provide parishioners with confidence in the administration of their Parish Council. Internal controls are adequate and effective and have been robustly adjusted to deal with the consequences of the Covid19 situation.”***

Cllr Caroline Hainsworth (Chair) gave a special mention to Helen Bill who is sadly no longer with us and highlighted the work that Helen and Steve Bill did from their years of Neighbourhood Watch

experience and how **Helen's Helping Hands** (formerly Colsterworth Resilience Forum) came about. Helen co-ordinated a group of volunteers who ensured that our vulnerable residents were cared for helping with shopping, transport for Doctors/Hospital appointments, prescription collection and sometimes a friendly voice at the end of the telephone. This is still continuing and the Parish Council best wishes and thoughts go to Helen's husband Steve and daughter Sam and all her family and friends and all those people that knew her and appreciated all she did for the community.

### **Work of Committees and Working Groups - Cllr Hainsworth reported the following: -**

- **North Witham New Play Area Good News**

Back in February 2020 Council agreed to set up a Working Group with the aim of providing new equipment and upgrade the existing Play Area at the North Witham Village Hall. This was further supported in March 2020 with ringfenced Council reserves of £4,000 to facilitate a grant application to FCC Communities Foundation.

With the close co-operation and collaboration with the Village Hall Committee in North Witham who had undertaken extensive consultations on the scheme, the Grant application was formulated and submitted during the Summer of 2020

In December 2020 we were delighted to receive confirmation that the Board of Directors of FCC Communities Foundation had allocated a grant of up to £31,177.00 towards the eligible costs of the project.

Despite the ongoing restrictions due to Covid, the order was placed in February 2021 with Wicksteed, the approved contractor, with a provisional date for installation of the new equipment hopefully in June 2021 - Covid and weather permitting!

- **War Memorial Project**

In February 2019 Council agreed to investigate the funding available to provide a definitive diagnosis and prognosis of the deterioration of the War Memorial from the War Memorial Trust (WMT).

This phase of the Project has benefitted from successful grant applications of £2,000 from InvestSK , £1,500 from the War Memorial Trust and a commitment from Council reserves of £4,000

The Investigation Report has been received however, the Pandemic put the whole project on hold for most of 2020 due to the furlough of the specialist Architect approved by the War Memorial Trust.

In March 2021 the Parish Council received confirmation of the appointment of a new Architect who was taking over the project and a Working Group has been able to meet with them to take it forward to the next phase.

The War Memorial is very special to individuals and the Community which has a strong military presence both serving and veteran.

- **Highways and Footpaths**

The **community speedwatch scheme** has been suspended since March 2020 due to Covid-19 precautions but this can now be resumed and new volunteers are most welcome with training hopefully being available from July 2021

**Village entrance “White Gates” are being considered by Council** as a road safety measure, but investigations into costings and feasibility are still ongoing along with seeking community support.

Parish Council priorities for Lincolnshire County Council Highways continue to remain:-

- Potholes and road safety – these can all be reported on LCC FixmyStreet by individuals <https://fixmystreet.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>
- High Street Traffic Calming
- Bridge End – Parking on verges, flooding risk, access and poor street lighting.
- A1 safety issues
- Flooding, Drainage, Soakaways

### **Parish Council Routine Council Business**

#### **Mission Statement 2021 – 2022 is:-**

*To provide services for, and manage and maintain the assets of, the village of Colsterworth and District within the resources provided by the annual precept and other incomes, taking into account the wishes of the residents and obtaining value for money.*

- **Community Cleaners**

Clr Hainsworth (Chair) Thanked the Parish Council dedicated Community Cleaners Kevin and Mark who carried on working throughout the pandemic litter picking on their contracted routes and not forgetting removing the dog waste bags from the dog waste bins.

- **New Website**

The new free website provided by Lincolnshire County Council went live in 2020. This was time consuming for the Clerk transferring the information from the old website to the new one. The new

website conforms to the new accessibility rules and as commented by the internal auditor ***“The new website has been set up and conforms to the reporting requirements for Transparency.”***

- **In touch**

Again, Covid did impact on the logistics of getting In Touch to the 1000 households in the Parish so a special thanks to the Volunteers who made this happen. And also to the Editor and resident contributors.

- **Allotments and Cemeteries**

“Business as usual” with ongoing inspections being undertaken by the Clerk and Councillors – socially distanced of course and made possible in these outside spaces.

### **Community Events**

Cllr Hainsworth was pleased to report that it was a real testament to the community that groups and individuals continue to do good things for the community – it might be fundraising – it might be about bringing people together - or it might just be that small thing that puts a smile on your face.

- **Remembrance Day 2019** saw a great turn out of residents paying their respects and a Team of “Poppy Knitters” co-ordinated by Jackie Taylor creating the Poppy Wall in St John the Baptist Church and the other displays from the Colsterworth Church of England Primary School, Beavers and Cubs to name a few.
- Sadly the planned **VE Day 2020** event was cancelled due to the pandemic, but people still marked it with flags and tea parties in their own household
- **Remembrance Day of 2020** was very different to previous years, Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) was pleased to be able to lay a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council and Parishioners as is done every year, alongside a number of Parishioners and wreath layers in a limited and socially distanced period of Remembrance.
- **Voluntary Litter Picking A1 Fly overs** – This was started by local resident Graham Keily with Cllr Bob Adams who was then joined by several other volunteers litter picking those areas that our Community Cleaners are not contracted to work on. Over 100 orange bags have been filled with all descriptions of litter including over 100 plastic bottles containing some very dubious yellow liquid – very unpleasant!
- **Christmas Lights Switch on** – Unfortunately because of the COVID-19 regulations at the time this was a very small event with a handful of residents turning up for the switch on. All the same, the Christmas Lights on the Yew Trees at St John the Baptist church yard were a symbol of light, hope and goodwill. This year the Parish Council hope for a much bigger switch on event similar to previous years.

Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) hoped that the established groups that have been “on hold” this past year will start flourishing again – The WI, Focus Group, Village Hall and Nature Trail.

Cllr Hainsworth (chair) mentioned a few of those things that even with the difficulties of the past year individuals managed to bring some cheer: -

- Pictures on the Nature Trail facebook page sharing the wonderful flora and fauna on the trail through the year.
- the seasonal knitted topper on the post box on Bourne Road
- the Halloween Trail
- the bauble bombing at Christmas on the Nature Trail
- nativity and easter trails for children
- the posters and pictures in windows and chalk drawings on pavements by the children.

Cllr Hainsworth closed by saying again a particular thank you to the Parish Clerk, Sue Grant, Parish Councillors and all the volunteers who make this community what is it. She also thanked County and District Councillors Bob Adams and David Bellamy who have continued to support the Parish Council with links to South Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council. Cllr Hainsworth gave special thanks to Mo Taylor, David Heath French and Neil Griffiths for giving their time that evening and for everyone attending and wished all good health for the future.

#### **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)**

- **The Internal Audit Report** was completed on 09/04/21 and the Parish Council achieved a ‘**Yes**’ that all internal controls had been met.
- The Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/2021 has been completed and was signed at the May Parish Council Meeting and submitted to the External Auditors PKF on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

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

#### **Bank Balances at 31/03/21**

- Community Account £17,839.75
- Community Savings Account £54,317.24
- **Total £72,156.99**
- Less unrepresented payments at 31/03/2021 of **£3,050.25 = £69,106.74**

Receipts for 2020/2021 = £53,432.42

Payments for 2020/2021 = £44,471.87

Leaving a surplus of £5,910.30 taking into account unrepresented payments at 31/03/2021 of £3,50.25

## **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. Update on the Newton Project by the Reverend Neil Griffiths.**

The Reverend Neil Griffiths summarised the Isaac Newton Project to date and provided a vision of its future. He said that the Arts Day linked in well with the Isaac Newton Project for Community Events. The four focusses for the Church are: -

1. For flexible modern worship.
2. Create a modern community space, flexible for learning and community events.
3. Create an education space to learn about the church and the Village.
4. Create a space that recognises our heritage and links to Sir Isaac Newton.

After an unsuccessful application to the 'Heritage Lottery Fund' in 2020 they are now looking towards a phased approach for funding.

Phase 1 : Approximately £70,000 to have running water/sewage, bathroom facilities and a servery. Removing some pews and re-siting the Font to the corner giving a much more flexible space. To fund this work funding bids have been made and further bids are planned, and some funds have already been secured Once phase one is complete the Church will be better able to meet the needs of the community post COVID-19.

### **6. Colsterworth Festival of Remembrance (CfoR) update by David Heath French.**

David thanked the Cllr Hainsworth (Chair) for being invited to speak and explained that CfoR had been set up to support Remembrance Sunday and the Community after identifying that the area had many serving and retired servicemen/women. David reminded everyone of the format of the Remembrance Service (pre Coronavirus):-

- Outdoor Service at the War Memorial
- Tea/Coffee previously offered by local residents.
- Guest speakers for names of the fallen.
- A local Bugler.
- Then a formed gaggle to the respective Church (St John the Baptist or The Methodist).

David explained that CfoR is funded by volunteers and fund-raising events such as the knitted poppy's cakes sale and hamper raffle. David spoke of the aspirations of CfoR fund raising for the future for example:-

- An 'Experience Ticket' raffle, physical challenges (sponsorship), purchase of silhouettes and more functional flower bed stands and the potential to have a flag pole at the War Memorial.
- The potential to open up their own Royal British Legion (RBL) brand to represent RBL through CfoR.

More information can be found on the CfoR website at <https://www.cfor.org.uk/>

### **7. Update on the Nature Trail by the Nature Trail Ranger Mo Taylor.**

The Nature Trail lead Ranger Mo Taylor introduced himself saying that he was pleased that now COVID restrictions were easing the Volunteers were back working on the Nature Trail, socially distanced. Mo reported the following:-

- More trails had been opened and a new picnic area had been created at Bridge End.

- Litter had been an issued but appreciated the Facebook Posts and litter picker helpers.
- Thank you to KWR Plant Hire (The Russell's) for looking at the Ash trees (Ash die back) and offering to help with cutting down dangerous trees at no cost to the Parish Council.
- Proposed application to the SK Community Fund up to a maximum of £5,000 with the Parish Council committing to 20% or £1,000 maximum match funding for repairs to the Nature Trail steps and railings.
- Proposed application for the Lincolnshire Environmental Awards 2021 to establish a new entrance and green space at the Bridge End entry to the old village by-pass.

Mo finished by giving special thanks to the volunteers, local businesses, The White Lion & KWR for their continued support.

#### **8. Motions by Electors**

None

#### **9. AOB**

None

**The meeting closed at 7.52pm**

**Signed:  
Chairman**

**Date**