**Minutes of Coldridge Parish Council Meeting 19.30 on Thursday September 14th 2023**

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

DCC **Councillor** Margaret Squires

**Clerk** Keyth Richardson

**Apologies:** **MDDC Councillor** Natalia Letch

Three members of the public were present.

**Open Forum**

No issues were raised.

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| 2023/24-37 | **Welcome by Chairman** | Andrew Green welcomed all to the meeting |
| 2023/24-38 | **Recording of meetings** | no-one was recording the meeting |
| 2023/24-39 | **Apologies** | Apologies had been received from MDDC Natalia Letch |
| 2023/24-40 | **Declarations of interest** | None reported. |
| 2023/24-41 | **Minutes** | The minutes of the meeting on July 24th 2023, were approved and signed |
| 2023/24-42 | **Matters arising not appearing on the agenda** | The plans for D-Day 2024 celebrations were noted and it is envisaged the Council will work with the Village Hall committee on having a beacon, BBQ and bar in the field next to the village hall; there will need to be negotiation with Graham Knott over use of the field. |
| 2023/24-43 | **Defibrillator training 31st July** | It was agreed that this was the best session so far, with plenty of activity for all to take part in. It was provided by Jay’s Aim and was free. It was agreed that they would be invited back again in 2024. |
| 2023/24-44 | **Proposed closure of DCC mobile library** | Following the very well attended meeting on August 9th, the publicity in the Crediton and Courier and work carried out by John Smith with the Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin the main organiser of the protest it was noted this campaign has much support. JS gave a summary of action so far, and this is an appendix to these minutes. It was noted that other nearby parishes are served by other mobile libraries. The following was passed by the Council and the clerk was asked to send this to the MDDC and DCC Councillors as well as DCC itself.  *This Council recognises the huge importance of the mobile library service across the whole of Devon. We request that Devon County Council rethink their decision to close the service across Devon and seek a way to replace the mobile library vans. We ask DCC to explore future opportunities of the mobile service which will enhance lives for our rural communities. Books are the foundations of education. To help lift our communities out of poverty, deprivation, isolation, and loneliness we should be increasing access to books not removing them. There is a ground swell of public support to save our treasured mobile library service including celebrities and authors Stephen Fry, Michael Rosen, Michael Morpurgo, Dermot O’Leary, Nick Butterworth, Sarah McIntyre, Jacqueline Wilson, Belinda Bauer, Liz Shakespeare, Veronica Henry, Patrick Gale, Tanya Landman, Claire Barker and Harriet Knock.* |
| 2023/24-45 | **Long service award** | it was agreed to purchase engraved glass trophies for Jeff Burrows (50 years) and Jim Sampson (46 years) and as time is of the essence and the clerk will be on holiday Ivan Kriznik will follow this up and agree the wording with other councillors. |
| 2023/24-46 | **Church Clock update** | The Chairman reminded all present that the Parish Council must always look to find best value for money for any expenditure. In discussion with a local qualified clock repairer, and a skilled tower clock repairer machinist, it was expected that the cost could be reduced to about £3500. Whilst there was some discussion about whether the existing clock maintenance firm would still be interested in continuing with the contract the Chairman told the meeting that during the Clerk’s wider investigations over possible funding there are several other firms who can this work.  Ivan Kriznik will investigate setting up crowd funding with input from the Clerk as there are many people in the locality who would donate to this cause.  Fitting an automatic winder was briefly discussed, but was left to be looked at in the future. |
| 2023/24-47 | **Finance** | The following payments were agreed.   * 1. Clerk’s wages £176.11   2. Clerk’s expenses £7.00   3. Donation to Jay’s Aim £25.00   4. Payment to MDDC for the contested election £1361.84 |
| 2023/24-48 | **Coldridge Village Noticeboard repairs** | Malcolm Bedford has produced a plan of action with Trevor and will be starting soon.  Chris Burrows will talk to Graham Warsop about putting a noticeboard inside the Linhay at West Leigh to protect it and make it more accessible. The current one is too small and not worth repairing.  East Leigh was given some maintenance in the last few years and will be looked at after the other two. |
| 2023/24-49 | **Planning** | No live issues at present |
| 2023/24-50 | **Highways** | Ivan Kriznik had circulated a summary of his time with Stephen Tucker and Margaret Squires. He will keep in touch with Stephen. Some potholes have been repaired, some still await repair and IK will monitor these.  There is scheme to repair the road by the sewage plant near Hobby Moor Cross, and the persistent flooding by the triangle in the village; both are dependent on funding.  IK and ST agreed on the style and size of the signage to inform drivers that there is no HGV access to C&R Construction from Frogbury Cross as well as a sign at Hobby Moor Cross directing drivers to C&R. AG and JS will speak to C&R to implement these.  The culvert between Hobby Moor Cross and Church Lane Cross is blocked and it was agreed to see if a way could be found to unblock the end in the field.  A discussion on the installation of a mirror which has appeared on the NW side of Frogbury Cross took place. It was agreed it was of no benefit, and in some cases was a distraction. The Clerk was asked to pass on the concern of the Council about the installation of this mirror and request a DCC Highways officer investigate this. The Council feels it should be removed.  Despite assurances from the landowner to AG the debris is still covering the road from Burrow Plot Cross to Frogbury Cross, and this will be dangerous when wet. This needs sweeping up. AG agreed to speak to the landowner again.  As always the public are encouraged to continue to report defects on the DDC website as this is what the DCC Officers use to note issues and to plan work. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/> |
| 2023/24-51 | **Councillor’s reports** | Several Councillors had received communication from Openreach concerning the upgrading of the internet provision in Coldridge village, which is served by the Lapford exchange.  The removal of the copper wires and their replacement by fibre optics would mean that in the case of a power cut no landline phones would work, nor would some emergency alert systems. This is a result of the Voice Over Internet Protocol being adopted (VOIP). Concerns were expressed that anyone who did not have internet would not have a phone, which would affect some of the older residents.  As Phil Bridges is understood to have some knowledge on this matter, and had spoken to the Clerk on this topic a while ago, the Clerk was asked to speak to him and see if there is anything which needs to, or can be, done regarding providing information to parishioners.  CB was concerned that the 3 Rivers project undertaken by MDDC involving the establishment of an arm’s length company to build houses had cost all council taxpayers money due to its failure and closure, and that no-one was to blame for this.  MS provided further information, and it transpires that the root cause of the issue was the money spent on a very poor site in Tiverton. 3 Rivers aim was to increase the supply of council properties to rent. It was well-intentioned but it did not work out a planned.  AG questioned the decision to employ extra staff as a Stakeholder Liaison Team, within Highways at Devon County Council. In particular whether the added cost will provide benefits to council taxpayers. MS explained these new staff were providing support to the highway’s officers, relieving them of some their routine work so they could concentrate on more urgent and important issues.  MS reported that children leaving DCC Care were being given more support particularly in financial matters and it was hoped this would help them settle down and in the long term would be of benefit as it would steer the youngsters away from unwanted influences. |
| 2023/24-52 | **Date of next meeting** | To final date for 2023 is November 16th .This meeting will set the dates for 2024 and also set the budget for 2024/25 |

The meeting closed at 21.30

Signed: