

Minutes of a meeting of the **COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE** of Coleshill Town Council held in the Town Hall, High Street, Coleshill on Wednesday 13 February 2019.

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PRESENT: Councillor Farrell in the Chair  
Councillors: Farrow and Wallace  
Also present: Cllr. Richardson and Symonds.

## **17 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies given.

## **18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were declared.

## **19 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Cllr. Wallace, seconded by Cllr. Farrow and **ACCEPTED** as a true record. Cllr. Farrell updated members that a contractor had now been engaged to undertake the Chamberlain Walk paving repair work.

## **20 REVIEW OF THE GRANT SCHEME**

The Council launched a Grant Scheme in 15/16, first agreed payments in November 2015. The fourth year of the scheme in 18/19 had been completed, with fewer applications than in the previous years and often from a familiar group of applicant organisations.

The £10,000 sum had been agreed for the 19/20 budget. Members were keen that the publicity for the next year's scheme reached out to other groups and to ensure the working group took account of the financial well-being of organisations to ensure they were in need of financial assistance before agreeing grants.

## **21 ISSUE WITHIN THE COUNCIL'S OPERATIONS**

A summary had been provided by the Town Clerk of those issues of most concern to residents and also some of the measures to address them.

Mole hills were being moved to fill the uneven ground in the lower part of the cemetery, helping to reduce on problem with another one.

Although more cemetery grounds had been acquired it would take a little time to prepare them for burials. Although the budget set for 19/20 had assumed that cemetery income might be higher if pre-sales were to be allowed, this principle still needed a Town Council decision before it could be agreed policy.

Other improvements (e.g. to Town Hall car park marking) were noted.

## **22 HS2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FUND APPLICATION**

There was a long Expression of Interest form required to be completed in order to commence the HS2 CEF process. The Community & Partnerships Manager had completed the form which had been sent on line. There had been a large amount of input and assistance from Borough and County Council officials and a legal firm with expertise in HS2 applications. The highest level (£75,000) in the 'lower touch' scheme had been the basis of the application which centred around moving the Community Hub downstairs and providing additional resource hours and new equipment and technology.

It was expected that a response would take 8 weeks from the application date of 1 February. There had been queries about the freehold status of the Town Hall and a request for a copy of the title deed but the Community & Partnerships Manager had responded to these matters. She was thanked for following through the Expression of Interest process so thoroughly.

## **23 LOVE COLESHILL REQUEST ON CHRISTMAS LATE NIGHT SHOPPING**

For the last few years, the Love Colehill Consortium had run a Christmas late-night shopping event on the last Thursday in November to coincide with November pay day. The Chairman of the retailer group had written to the Town Council asking it to take on the full responsibility for the High Street and town centre elements. The Council had, for many years, hosted an annual Charity Christmas Fair in the Town Hall for local groups and charities to raise awareness and funds but not organised the outdoor events.

There were resourcing issues for the Town Council in that the Remembrance Day and Christmas Fair were already stretching at the tail end of the year.

Cllr. Farrell felt that if the Town Council became more centrally involved with organising the late-night shopping event, it should not be assumed that it would take on the full arrangements, as of recent years. For instance, voluntary organisations, Scouts and interest groups could be encouraged to help. Other members agreed that the Town Council should not step in to take full responsibility for what had been provided in recent years but facilitate a late-night shopping event. This was **ACCEPTED** unanimously.

It was expressed by Cllr. Wallace that the Town Council was not an events organiser and the principle of the late-night shopping should be to help the traders rather than setting out to provide stalls and vans that were in competition with local traders. Members were concerned about the issues created in 2018 regarding the operation of the road closures (exacerbated by an accident on the M6 that brought traffic through the town). It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that there was to not be a road closure at all, with some ideas suggested as:

- The use of St Peter's Walk for any feature stalls /outdoor gathering,

- Encouraging voluntary organisations to apply to the Grants Scheme to facilitate support to the events,
- The Town Council to purchase its own outdoor PA system rather than renting one,
- Encouraging the opening up the Parish Church, the Parish Rooms and the Old Market Hall as well as the Town Hall to spread the organisational effect.

It was also the view of Love Coleshill and members that a Saturday rather than a Thursday late-night shop would better suit the traders. As the Town Hall was already booked for Saturday 7 December, it was **AGREED** the late-night shop and Christmas Fair date for 2019 would be 30 November.

## **24 HIGH STREET BUSINESS SUPPORT**

Within the Council's 4-Year Action Plan there is a main objective "to support the development of the town's High Street and local businesses." There was a task line to work with local businesses to promote the High Street. The earlier items on the HS2 Community Engagement Fund application and the Late Night Shopping arrangements were relevant.

In addition, the Community and Partnership Manager has been a regular informal attendee at Love Coleshill committee meetings and Cllr. Mason has been appointed as a contact point. Love Coleshill had a Business Plan with some worthwhile suggestions to progress but probably needed resource help before it could register interest in the HS2 Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF).

Members discussed the fact that Atherstone seemed likely to receive central Government High Street Fund monies as it had a well-developed support plan with assistance from an outside contractor. Councillors also considered the £30,000 that this Town Council had allocated to a High Street Fund.

The Town Clerk and Community & Partnerships Manager had met with a couple of agencies which had proposed ideas to use part of this fund. One of the agencies appeared aware of a desire to 'do' rather than merely 'advise' on actions. It had scoped out proposals to work with landlords, retailers and local authorities on the ground.

The **Town Clerk** was to prepare a paper to the next Community and Partnerships Committee based on what these Atherstone and Coleshill-contacted agencies described was possible, utilising the £30,000 that this Town Council had allocated in the budget.

## **25 HIGH STREET TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Roger Hateley attended the meeting. He had written to Councillors about Coleshill congestion and parking. The Town Clerk had forwarded the letter to Cllrs. Reilly and Hayfield, (Warks. County Council) for interest but had also agreed with the committee chairman that the issues could be discussed at a future meeting of this committee.

Some members had reservations about freeing up the High Street by making Parkfield Road one way (and parking on one side) as buses would struggle to negotiate the tight corners. Also, it would mean difficulties for a bus stop on the High Street.

Cllr. Farrell advised that the new Sprint inner town bus service planned for the Commonwealth Games could allow smaller buses into Coleshill. Cllr. Wallace believed that the Borough Council should still be considering a two-tier car park off Church Hill. Cllr. Symonds referred members to the modelling that Cllrs. Hayfield and Reilly were commissioning and that this would need to be reviewed before any recommendations..

The **Town Clerk** agreed to circulate Mr. Hateley's letter to all members.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m.

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Chairman