

YARNFIELD AND COLD MEECE PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES
Friday 15 September 2023
Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

Present (for all or part of the meeting): -

Councillors:

David Beeston	Sally Parkin (Chairperson)
Margaret Broader	Kirsty Treen
Jo Griffiths	Ed Whitfield
Stella Hughes	

Officer in attendance: John Fraser, Clerk to the Parish Council

Also in attendance: Cllr Roy James (SBC), Khadija Sharrif, Trevor Parkin

Public at the meeting: 2

Viewing on Facebook: 12

Apologies for Absence

23-352 Apologies were received from – Cllr Jeremy Pert (SCC)

Declaration of Interest

23-353 Nil

Public Question Time

23-354 Question 1

A report has been made to Staffordshire County Council about the state of the roadside gutters and weeds getting out of control on the Yarnfield Park estate. Can this be raised as a complaint at the next Parish meeting.

Response

The roads on Yarnfield Park have now been adopted by Staffordshire County Council. The question is linked to work already being done by the parish council to lodge complaints with the County Council about similar problems on other roads in the parish and will be added to the growing list of actions.

23-355 Question 2

The junction of South Road is very dangerous with traffic travelling on Meece Road not being aware of the junction. Could the Parish Council pursue getting road markings and signs placed at the junction of South Road and Meece Road, Cold Meece, to warn oncoming traffic.

Response

The Parish Council will raise this issue with Staffordshire County Council highways department.

Reports from Borough and County Councillors

23-356 Cllr James

- The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 provides powers to control the number and location of sex establishments. The borough council has completed a public consultation on the regulation of sex establishments in the borough. The proposals will be considered at the next available meeting of the Borough Council.

HS2 – update on proposals

23-357 The Stone Railhead Crisis Group update is attached at Appendix 1.

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July, 2023

23-358 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 July, 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September, 2023

23-359 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 September, 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

Community Action Group Meeting held on 18 July, 2023

23-360 The Community Action Group continues to work on plans to add to the number of defibrillators in the parish, focusing on Cold Meece and the area around Ford Drive, Yarnfield.

23-361 A Cream Tea was held in July which raised £313.54 and will be added to the defibrillator budget.

23-362 The Group plan to continue the excellent program of planting spring flowering bulbs throughout the parish. The estimated cost of purchasing bulbs this year and compost will be £220 including VAT.

23-363 The next parish tidy up will be held on 21 October, 2023.

23-364 **Resolution:** It was resolved to approve the purchase of spring flowering bulbs and compost.

Actions Tracker Update

23-365 Minute 22-58 – Network Plus repairs

- Following the involvement of the Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Lead for Highways some of the outstanding repairs to Yarnfield Lane have been carried out by Network Plus. Not all the items identified by the Parish Council as needing action were accepted by Staffordshire County Council. While this is disappointing it was decided no further action could be taken by the parish council.

23-366 Minute 23-278 – Post Office Bungalow/ Village Green Hedge

- Instructions have been issued to Trent Grounds Maintenance to cut the hedge running along the footpath as it crosses the brook.

23-367 Minute 23-172 – Damaged Openreach inspection chamber and cover plate

- Following an exchange with the CEO of Openreach the work to repair the inspection chamber and cover plate has been completed.

- 23-368 Minute 21-524 – Village Green Project
- The project is still waiting a decision on the granting of the lease to the Parish Council. The delay is caused by the Borough Council not having a budget to pay for the advert for the proposed lease in the local press.
- 23-369 Minute 23-296 – Homes Plus Estate Management
- The neighbourhood officer from Homes Plus has agreed to a meeting to discuss arrangements for the maintenance of their estate in Yarnfield.
 - Cllr Hughes asked to be involved.
- 23-370 Minute 23-299 – Road Safety
- The PCSO has asked that the parish council provides details of the particular children at risk and has agreed to contact the families.
- 23-371 Minute 23-333 – repair to the bench on footpath 11
- The cost of wood to complete the repair will be £120.60
- 23-372 Minute 23-231 – Greenside Playground – swing basket renovation
- The parts required to renovate the swing basket have been received and plans have been agreed to complete the work.
- 23-373 Minute 22-47 – Firing Range
- A site visit to the range took place on 24 August, 2023. Acoustic cladding work on the range has been completed and Stafford Borough Council Environmental Health will be undertaking further monitoring of the operation of the range.
 - The planning application for the construction of the new purpose built range at Stafford is still waiting for planning approval.
- 23-374 Minute 21-499 – Severn Trent work Highlows/Yarnfield Lane
- A letter has been sent to the CEO at Severn Trent as all other avenues have been exhausted. This has led to a meeting being arranged with the West Midlands Asset Planning Lead at Severn Trent.
- 23-375 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:
- The clerk work with Cllr James to find a solution to the payment of the advert for the village green lease.
 - An order is placed to buy the wood needed to repair the bench on Footpath 11.
 - A copy of the Update of Actions Report set out in Appendix 2 is to be posted on the parish council website.

Parish Clerk's report:

- 23-376 Budgets
- Schedule of invoices awaiting payment for the period 13 July– 17 August, 2023 = £2,062.52. (The payments were made in line with the Finance Regulations for payment of annually agreed payments.)
 - Schedule of invoices awaiting payment for the period 18 August – 15 September, 2023 = £3,350.84.
 - A transfer of £1,000 from the reserve account to the current account is required to keep the account in credit.
 - Current Account bank reconciliation on 15 September, 2023 after taking into account outstanding payments and transfers = £510.27

- 23-377 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:
- i. The schedule of payment for the period 13 July – 17 August, 2023 is noted
 - ii. The schedule of payment for the period 18 August – 15 September, 2023 is approved
 - iii. A transfer of £1,000 is made from the reserve account to the current account.

Annual Audit and Governance Review

23-378 The Audit and Governance Review has now been completed by the external auditor, who has reported no errors or identified any deficiencies in the operation of the parish council.

23-379 The results of the annual audit must be published on the parish council website by the 30 September, 2023.

23-380 To prepare for next year's audit, arrangements need to be made to appoint the parish council's internal auditor. This function has been performed by Blackrose Solutions since 2021, and they have indicated they would be prepared to take on this work in 2024.

23-381 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:

- i. The results of the annual audit and governance review were noted.
- ii. Blackrose Solutions are appointed as the council's internal auditor for the 2024 annual audit and governance review.

Duke of Edinburgh student sponsorship

23-382 One of the students the Parish Council is sponsoring through their Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award has prepared a report on the community service work he has undertaken and is looking to see this element of the award signed off by the Parish Council.

23-383 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the clerk submit a complimentary assessor's report and write to the student thanking him for the work he has done.

Labour in Vain – Working Group Project Plan

23-384 The listing of the Labour in Vain as an asset of community value has been challenged by the owners. Stafford Borough Council is reviewing their original decision and have invited the Parish Council to respond to the review request. Further information on why the Parish Council believes the original decision was properly made has been sent to the Borough Council. A decision on the review is expected by 22 September, 2023.

23-385 Stonegate has now confirmed with Stafford Borough Council their intention to dispose of the Labour in Vain.

23-386 The Parish Council has confirmed with Stafford Borough Council that they wish to be considered as a potential bidder for the property, thereby triggering the moratorium period which will run until 31 January, 2024.

23-387 A core group, which is made up of three parish councillors, six residents and the clerk has now formed to develop the Labour in Vain Project

23-388 A "Save our Pub" petition has been launched. 347 people have put their name to the petition.

23-389 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:

- i. The Labour in Vain Working Group is constituted from the core group and will include Cllrs. Beeston, Treen and Whitfield, 6 residents and the clerk to develop the Labour in Vain project.
- ii. An expression of interest is submitted to the Community Ownership Fund.
- iii. The Working Group is asked to prepare a full application to the Community Ownership Fund to be submitted by 11 October, 2023.
- iv. The completed application to the Community Ownership Fund is to be presented to the Parish Council at a special meeting to be held on 9 October, 2023.
- v. An approach is made to the owner and their agent to establish the level of commercial interest to buy the pub and to set out the Parish Council's commitment to form a community interest company who would seek to purchase the pub.

Neighbourhood Plan – update and next actions

- 23-390 A meeting with the AECOM consultant was held on 25 July, 2023 followed by a site meeting at which the master plan sites were visited.
- 23-391 A new bidding round has been opened by LOCALITY to fund neighbourhood plan preparation bids.
- 23-392 **Resolution:** It was resolved that a bid is made to LOCALITY to help pay for the final stages of the neighbourhood plan production.

Updates from Parish Councillors

- 23-393 Cllr Hughes attended a meeting of the Stone Parish Liaison Group. The next meeting of the Group, which will be on 1 November, 2023, will focus on work of the Staffordshire County Council Highways Department.
- 23-394 Cllr Treen provided an update on the work of the Yarnfield Park Resident's Association.
- 23-395 Cllr Parkin reported:
- That she had a meeting on 25 July, 2023 with the Borough Council's cabinet lead for Planning and Economic Regeneration, Cllr Reid. The meeting dealt with the relationship between the parish and borough council and issues of importance to the parish. Cllr Reid agreed to follow up concerns about the lack of progress in completing work on the lease of the village green. He also asked that all issues relating to planning enforcement be referred to the Cllrs James and Nixon to pursue.
 - A meeting on 9 August, 2023 with the HS2 and Rail Minister, local MPs and the SRCG was hosted by the parish council. The meeting provided a unique opportunity to brief the Minister on the work of the SRCG, their proposals for a better way of delivering high speed links to Manchester and their assessment of the spiralling costs of the HS2 project.
 - A meeting was held on 16 August, 2023 with Clare Rawlings the Health and Wellbeing Lead for the SPCA. The meeting covered ideas about the delivery of health and wellbeing projects by parish councils and specifically the work Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council was doing. Unfortunately, she subsequently resigned and the SPCA are now advertising for her replacement.

- **Resolution:** It was resolved that a list of planning compliance issues is prepared, and that Cllr James is asked to raise these concerns with the Borough Council.

Planning application – enforcement complaints

23-396 NIL

Cllr training dates

23-397 The SPCA has prepared a list of training dates which will be circulated to councillors.

Planning – to consider any planning applications in the parish

23-398 Nil

Forward Plan

23-399 The next meeting scheduled for the 11 October, 2023 may need to be rearranged to take place on the 9 October, 2023 to consider the submission of an application to the Community Fund.

Date and time of next meeting

11th October, 2023 at 7.30pm



Signed

Chairperson of the Parish Council

Date: 9 October, 2023

Meeting closed 9.15pm

July Y&CMPC – HS2 report

Hopefully most parish residents have received their copy of the Newsletter. The article on page 4 covers the main points of interest, although there are a few additional points I want to make.

Realigned Yarnfield Lane

During our discussions with HS2 and its contractors and consultants in March we identified numerous major safety concerns with the proposed design of the realigned lane. This led to a Freedom of Information request for further information that confirmed our fears. We sought additional information about the role of the local highway authority in the approval process in July, together with design information about the proposed A34/A51 roundabout junction amendments, but HS2 Ltd initially prevaricated and has now refused the request on spurious grounds. We will continue to seek the release of this information in the safety interest of the public.




Times article (4th September)


Contrary to the spin about HS2 increasing capacity on the WCML, the Times article exposed the truth about the real impacts of HS2 Phase 2 on the WCML at Crewe and what this will mean in terms of reduced inter-city services to 75% of West Coast stations north of Birmingham. Crewe itself will see the number of inter-city trains calling at the station halved from 4 trains per hour (tph) to just 2tph, together with the withdrawal of existing regional and local services calling at and passing through the station.

When HS2 Phase 2 opens, it will no longer be possible to catch a train to any destination north of Lancaster from Crewe and the impact on Stafford (inter-city services cut by one third) and Stoke-on-Trent (halved) will also be highly negative. Stafford will no longer be a call on the Euston to Liverpool service and Stoke-on-Trent will not have an inter-city connection to Manchester as the two Staffordshire stations will have to share a token Hs2 train that will terminate in Macclesfield.


HS2 Phase 2 is a disaster for the Midlands and North West that will actually result in a levelling down at a current estimated cost of £34 billion.

Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 9/10/23





	 Warning	 Action – in progress	 Achieved
April 2023	1	8	5
May 2023	2	10	0
June 2023	1	10	2
July 2023	1	10	1
September 2023	1	13	3
October 2023	1	11	2

Minute	Resolution	Action	RAG
Ambition 1 - Environment			
21-524	Village Green Project	<p>Stafford Borough Council confirm funding for the village green lease advert has been found.</p> <p>Meeting with officer leading this work set for Wednesday 18 October.</p> <p>Stafford Borough Council working to resolve issues with the lease of village green</p> <p>Parish Council meeting to be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To form a working group to prepare the tender for the village green project and to issue tenders documents - Resolve to submit a bid for money to the HS2 Community and Environment Fund - Conclude negotiations with Stafford Borough Council over the lease of the land. <p>Meeting with Planning and Streetscene held on 5 June.</p> <p>The cost of advertising the lease (£500) has yet to be resolved with Stafford Borough Council looking to see if they can identify a budget to pay for this.</p> <p>Planning to look at the boundary lines of the proposed lease to establish ownership details of the pavements surrounding the south green.</p> <p>Streetscene to review work needed to “red flagged” trees on the village green.</p>	



Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 9/10/23

		<p>Progress update report to be brought to next Parish Council Meeting (June 23)</p> <p>Site meeting with Stafford Borough Council officers from planning and Streetscene arranged.</p> <p>Progress on the project and lease of the village green has again stalled.</p> <p>Escalate action to the Borough Council’s Planning Officer</p> <p>Cabinet lead and ward councillors pressing Stafford Borough Council officers to release funds and agree the lease.</p> <p>Project to be added to new council work programme.</p>	
22-376	Yarnfield Lane Lay-by – litter and fly tipping.	<p>Working with SBC and SCC to find a permanent solution.</p> <p>Project to be added to new council work programme</p>	


Ambition – 2 Safety

23-291	Highway Repairs	<p>A complaint about the state of the junction of The Paddocks and Yarnfield Lane has been logged with Staffordshire County Council.</p> <p>A Freedom of Information Act request has been made to Staffordshire County Council for detail so their programme of highway repairs specifically relating to the parish and the criteria that they use for prioritising work.</p> <p>That residents are encouraged to log problems on the Staffordshire County Council report its website.</p>	
23-296	Homes Plus Estate Management	Contact made with Homes Plus Estate Management Team Lead. Meeting with estate walk to be confirmed.	
23-299	Road Safety – children	It was resolved that the complaint is reported to the Police Community Support Officer	
23-333	Footpath 11 – repair of bench	Quotation for timber needed to form replacement bench slates received at a cost of £120.60	





Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 9/10/23

21-499	Severn Trent work Highlows/Yarnfield Lane	<p>Meeting with Asset Planning Lead (Waste Networks) arranged. Location is being arranged.</p> <p>Email to CEO of Severn Trent. Problem delegated to senior officer at Severn Trent to resolve the problem. Contact made with the Asset Planning Lead (Waste Networks): meeting being arranged.</p> <p>Meeting arranged with STWCo Catchment Lead – Sewerage North Staffordshire and his colleagues</p> <p>Pressing STWCo engineering team for date phase 2 project will be started. Site visited by STWCo progress made on the scheme, date for start still to be confirmed. Request made for a site meeting with engineers responsible for the project.</p> <p>STWCo visit in April 2023 identified further complications with delivery of the project. Work with engineers to establish what needs to be done to see the work completed</p>	
23-231	Greenside Playground – swing basket renovation	<p>Repair to be undertaken to the swing basket. Parts received.</p> <p>Order parts required to renovate the basket swing ordered.</p>	

Parish Ambition – 3 Community


23-323	Defibrillator project	<p>Meeting with AEDdonate to look at possible site on Ford Drive and in Cold Meece</p> <p>For possible sites.</p> <p>Application to National Grid to provide cost for unmetered cable supply started</p> <p>Application for grant funding being explored.</p>	
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Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 9/10/23

23-267	Labour in Vain - Community Ownership Fund Round 3	<p>The review of the ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE found in favour of its retention but with the car park being removed</p> <p>Expression on interest has been approved – with one caveat – application and delivery must be by the same company</p> <p>Formation of a Community Interest Company proposed by the Working Group</p> <p>Asset Lock – can the parish council be named as the recipient of the asset lock</p> <p>LiV Action Group meeting 14/09/23 – agreed outline of the expression of interest application to the Community Ownership Fund.</p> <p>Closing Date for full application 11 October 2023.</p> <p>Meeting of the Parish Council - Community Meeting 7 September 2023 confirmed notice is given to Stafford Borough Council that the parish wish to be considered as a potential bidder</p>	
22-153	Yarnfield Lane Cycle path	<p>HSW Phase 2 cancellation may affect delivery of this project</p> <p>Application submitted to SCC decision not due until Spring 2024.</p>	
22-47	Firing Range	<p>Police confirm reporting arrangements with parish council to supply dates and time for the operation of the range.</p> <p>Awaiting results – see email from SB</p> <p>Monitoring of the site undertaken by Stafford Borough Council – 25 August 2023</p> <p>Site visit with Police, Property Services and Stafford Borough Council – 24 August 2023.</p> <p>No perceivable improvement in the noise from the site. Meeting with Police Estate Office, Firing Range Team, Stafford Borough Council and representative of the PFCC office.</p> <p>Stafford Borough Council Environmental Health to visit noise sensitive properties to carry out noise monitoring.</p> <p>SBC Environmental Health to SBC pressing Staffordshire Police for date to complete acoustic insulation work at the range.</p>	
21-488	Gates at Cold Meece	<p>Prices for gates being arranged – to be reported to the September</p> <p>Gate design, cost of procurement and installation to be present to September 2023 meeting</p>	

Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 9/10/23

Parish Ambition – 4 Good Governance

22-97	New Office Systems	<p>Community Development Officer – review of website to identify improvements.</p> <p>Councillors to be invited to share their thoughts on the website and what changes they would like to see.</p> <p>Meeting requested with SCC Digital Team before end of July 2023</p> <p>Contact SCC digital team to agree project to update the parish council website</p> <p>Project to be added to new council work programme.</p>	
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Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council
Schedule of Payments - 18 August 2023

Date	Ref/Chq no	Payee	Description	NET	VAT	Payment
10/08/2023	Debit Card	Yarnfield Park CC	HS2 Minister meeting refreshments	22.50		22.50
17/08/2023	BACS	Trent Grounds Maintenance	Grounds Maintenance Contract	924.50	184.90	1,109.40
17/08/2023	BACS	Village Hall	CAG - strawberry tea	30.00		30.00
17/08/2023	BACS	Village Hall	Room hire - Parish Council	114.00		114.00
17/08/2023	BACS	Parish Clerk	Salary	604.43		604.43
17/08/2023	BACS	HMRC	PAYE payment	151.20		151.20
17/08/2023	BACS	Parish Clerk	Office expenses	27.41	3.58	30.99
				1,874.04	188.48	2,062.52

[Minute 23-27 - Finance Regulations para 5.6 annually approved payments - to be reported to September 2023 meeting]

Account Transfers - 18 August 2023

		From	To		
18/08/23	Transfer	Community Action Group	Current Account		30.00
					30.00

Chairperson:



Date:


18-Aug-23

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council
Schedule of Payments -15 September 2023

Date	Ref/Chq no	Payee	Description	NET	VAT	Payment	
15/09/2023	BACS	Wicksteed	Basket swing repair	546.15	109.23	655.38	✓✓
15/09/2023	BACS	Trent Grounds Maintenance	Grounds Maintenance Contract	924.50	184.90	1,109.40	✓✓
15/09/2023	BACS	Clerk	Salary	604.63		604.63	✓✓
15/09/2023	BACS	Clerk	Office expenses	35.35	7.08	42.43	✓✓
15/09/2023	BACS	HMRC	PAYE payment	151.00		151.00	✓✓
15/09/2023	Bacs	Creative Bee Ltd	Newsletter	410.00		410.00	✓✓
15/09/2023	BACS	Mazars	External Audit	315.00	63.00	378.00	✓✓
				2,986.63	364.21	3,350.84	

Account Transfers - 15 September 2023

		From	To			
15/09/23	Transfer	General Reserve Account	Currant Account			1,000.00
						1,000.00

Chairperson: 
Date: 21.9.23