**DRAFT POULTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9th OCTOBER 2023**

**AT 7 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr. Simon Collyer-Bristow (Chair)

Cllr. Ed Hyslop (Vice Chair)

Cllr. Chris Davies

Cllr. Tom Gillibrand

Mrs. Heather Harris (Clerk)

No members of the public attended the meeting.

1. **Apologies for my absence.**

Cllr. Spivey sent her apologies to the Council, she is unwell and unable to attend this evening but, did send reports.

1. **Approval of Minutes.**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th July were approved and signed.

Matters arising.

Bell Lane – an amended drainage planning application has been submitted. The Parish Council have raised concerns regarding the increase flood risk and await the Planning Case Officer’s response.

Village Communications – Cllr. Gillibrand attended a meeting with the Editors of Poulton Eye to discuss the website, Facebook group, Whatsapp Group and Poulton Eye newsletter. A donation offered by the Parish Council of £250 has not been welcomed. Due to the closure of the CDD printing facility, alternative printers are being sought. The Poulton Eye Editors have requested £500 from the Parish Council but, as this represents 25% of the total discretionary funds available for all projects, this was felt to be unacceptable. The Parish Council’s offer of help with the project was also rejected. Church finances have been used to fund new facilities and are now not available to continue with the Poulton Eye. The Clerk to contact the Editors to renew the Council’s offer of £250.

Priory Lane – the ’20 is plenty’ signs will be used to encourage traffic to keep to an appropriate speed for the lane.

Ranbury bridge – clearance has been completed by Mr Buse. The Clerk was asked to contact Gloucestershire Highways and ask for a refund of the costs.

Playground maintenance – the gateway and hedge around the entrance have been trimmed. The weeding has yet to be completed due to inclement weather. The Chair will complete this work in due course.

1. **Report on Playground Refurbishment.**

Cllr. Hyslop said that the Cotswold Community Fund of up to £10,000 or 40% (whichever is the lower) has been applied for through the crowdfunding Spacehive. He said that it was horrendously user unfriendly but, despite this, he had met the deadline for this round of funding. There was a huge amount of documentation required. An estimated £28,000 of costs are required to replace the OXO tower and the Agility Trail. Cllr. Gillibrand and Cllr. Hyslop are obtaining quotes from various companies. The crowdfunding will require lots of small local pledges to show community engagement in addition to the allocated Parish Council funds. Cllr. Hyslop is applying for other charity funding and to the National Lottery. Airbnbs owners will be approached for a contribution. The equipment’s lead time is 6-8 weeks from ordering and the Council will look to order the replacement equipment by the end of January.

1. **County Councillor’s Report.**
2. **Boundary Review**

Following consultation on proposals earlier in the year to increase the number of county councillors from 53 to 55, The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has now published detailed proposals for new division boundaries.

The changes are being proposed to address the fact that growth and change in the local population means some divisions are now much bigger than others. The review will adjust the boundaries of the divisions to which councillors are elected in order to make sure that, from the next election (May 2025), every councillor represents a similar number of people.

The Commission is proposing changes to the boundaries of 39 divisions, with 14 staying the same. They are also proposing the creation of two new divisions: one in Stroud and one in Tewkesbury. The Commission is proposing that each division continue to be represented by one councillor.

The Local Government Boundary Commission now wants to hear what residents and local organisations think about their proposals.

The Commission has a dedicated section on its website where people can see the detail of the proposals and comment on the names of divisions and their boundaries: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/gloucestershire](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmxnYmNlLm9yZy51ay9hbGwtcmV2aWV3cy9nbG91Y2VzdGVyc2hpcmUiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjMxMDA2LjgzNjgzMzQxIn0.0CqkQ_CtempoWfusMm96fJh6Uln3CUWFQpYfrW_6K10/s/1614594462/br/227543162081-l)

Consultation on the proposals runs until 11 December 2023.

1. **Build Back Better Fund**

I still have funds available for community projects and each councillor has been awarded a top-up of £10,000. Funds must be spent by January 2025, so please do get in touch if you have a project that is ready to go.

1. **Flood Forum**

At the last Full Council meeting, the council unanimously supported a motion to look at flood prevention and hold a summit to ensure that the most at risk communities have flood risk management programmes in place to minimise potential flooding.

1. **Footpath maintenance – weeds**

In response to a member question regarding footpath maintenance, the Cabinet member for Highways, Cllr Dom Morris encouraged communities to tackle weeds and grass growing in local footpaths themselves. Cllr Morris said that “This does appear to be the perfect scenario where member led community self-help could free up our pressurised highways teams.”

1. **Grit bins**

Thanks to those who responded about new grit bins in your parish. All applications are being assessed and new bins will be allocated where there is most need.

1. **New Bus Funding**

The Council has recently been awarded a further £4.4million to go towards improving bus services in the County.

I am delighted that part of this has been allocated to setting up a “Robin” service in the South Cotswolds. The Robin is an on demand rural minibus service which has been operating successfully in the Forest of Dean and (somewhat less successfully) in the North Cotswolds for the last year. I have asked to be involved in designing how that works as this is something I think could be very useful in this area. Please let me know if you have any thoughts on this**.**

1. **District Councillor’s Report.**
2. Make My Home Green – Cotswold Solar project.

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-home-solar/>

Residents can get a £250 discount on solar panels via the Cotswold Solar scheme when they buy solar panels from Make My Home Green

1. Photo Comp is live – send in your photos of a fabulous place or community in our district by 19th October to win a Cotswold Monopoly game and the chance to see your photo printed on canvas and hung in the Council building.
2. Building work continues at Trinity Road with the East atrium almost ready for staff to move back into. Work will then commence on the west atrium and when completed will be let out to make better use of the office space and generate some income for the council.
3. Last chance for this round of Crowdfund Cotswold applications. We will be looking to allocate council funding to projects at the end of this month/beginning of next so if you have a project – big or small, this is the time to get going.

<https://www.spacehive.com/movement/cc>

1. UK SPF

Application is now open for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/news-items/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/>

We are especially interested in projects which support communities to bring forward schemes to improve their local area, encourage biodiversity, improve open spaces, and encourage active travel. We are also trying to support economic growth so projects which bring good quality jobs to local people would also be encouraged.

As this money must be spent within a specific time frame, it’s best to have a fully costed project with a clear delivery plan.

1. Changes to customer services phone times. From the beginning of November, the phone lines will be open Mon-Fri 9am – 2pm. This is to increase the staff capacity over the busiest periods and free up staff in the late afternoon to carry on with administrative jobs. Emergency lines will be available for dangerous building reports and emergency homelessness provision.
2. Thanks to those who attended the Town and Parish Forums in September. There will be further forums in December and a planning specific series of events to support parishes.
3. Crime reporting

I would like to encourage everyone to report any crime they are a victim of. There is often a perception that reporting crimes is not worth it because the police won’t do anything. This is sometimes unfortunately true as the police are so short staffed locally. In many instances, however, investigations do happen, and crimes are investigated far more than may be thought. It is very important to report all crimes because it is only by showing that crimes are being committed in the Cotswolds that the local police team will get extra officers and support.

You can use a new dedicated 101 online reporting system to report anti-social behaviour which may be easier that waiting on the phone:

<https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb-v3/report-antisocial-behaviour/>

And there is the online general crime reporting tool:

<https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is also running a perceptions of crime survey:

<https://www.ibyd.com/glosopccsurvey>

1. **Financial Report including account balances.**

Amounts received into the Current account:

Cotswold District Council (precept) £2,500

Amounts paid from the Current account:

A Buse (Ranbury bridge clearance) £75.00

Go Daddy (website) £143.86

HMRC (PAYE) £148.40

Clerk’s Wages (April-October) £594.34

Westcotec Limited (VAS repairs) £485.64

The Clerk reported that the National Joint Council for local government services have agreed a pay award of 3.88% for 2023/24.

Balances as at 8/10/23:

Current account £8,672.19

Deposit account £4,807.91

Long term Deposit account £15,834.09

1. **Speeding & Traffic Report.**

Cllr. Hyslop reported that the Police have signed off the four sites for the cameras. The first camera, which is Gloucestershire Police funded, will be place on the verge by Malt House, London Road. The second, on The Butts roadside near the workshops. The third and fourth, on London Road opposite Pedmore Cottage and the VAS 40 mph post. The cameras must be placed 50 yards from the gateways and have a clear line of sight and a mobile signal. There was no site to fit the criteria in Bell Lane although, every option was considered. The Police felt that the natural slowing caused by parked cars would be sufficient. A speed gun has been used to check speeding on the road and all vehicles were within the speed limit. Cllr. Hyslop is awaiting a costing from Gloucestershire Highways for the camera poles. Official signage will be available once the cameras are operational**.**

1. **Appointment of Trustees.**

Poulton Playing Field & Allotment charity have a vacancy for a Trustee following the resignation of the Chair, Mr Folkestad. The Clerk to advertise the vacancy as per the Standing Orders procedure.

1. **Any Other Business.**

Casual Vacancy – the Council still has one seat vacant and are looking to co-opt an interested villager.

Flooding meeting – the Chair will attend the meeting.

Remembrance Sunday – Mr Wood has ordered poppy wreaths on behalf of the Parish Council.

Rose Cottage, London Road – the Clerk will write to the owner to ask that the verge is properly maintained, and the bins removed.

Old Forge – the Police commented that the branches at this property are obscuring the 40-mph sign. The Clerk to write regarding this.

Verge by the bus shelter – Cllr. Gillibrand volunteering to tidy this area by the bus shelter.

Telephone Kiosk – the Clerk reported that she has arranged for the kiosk to be repainted and is on British Telecom’s scheme of work for spring 2024.

War Memorial – the Council thanked Mr Ranger for voluntarily weeding the War Memorial area.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

The next meeting will be on the 11th December 2023 at 7pm in the village hall.