

Colwich Parish Council



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 – 2019



The Parish Centre, St Marys Road, Little Haywood, Stafford, ST18 0TX
Tel: 01889 882665 Email: clerk@colwichparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.colwichparishcouncil.gov.uk

Introduction

Colwich Parish Council covers the villages of Colwich, Little Haywood, Great Haywood, Wolseley Bridge and Bishton. The Council has 14 members, elected every four years, who are split between the two wards of Little Haywood/Colwich and Great Haywood. The council employs four members of staff: the Parish Clerk, Deputy Parish Clerk and two part-time Lengthsmen.

The Full Council usually meets at 7:30pm on the first Thursday of every month. The December meeting was moved to the end of the month so as to be the final meeting of the calendar year. Extraordinary Full Council meetings were called in July and October to discuss the proposals to close Little Tixall Lane, linked to the proposed new development, as well as to consider the Council's position on HS2. Formal meetings are open to the public who may raise questions and concerns on any item on the Agenda. The following committees also met during the year: Environment & Leisure; Policy; Finance; Employment; Communications and Events. The Council also held Planning Committee meetings to discuss major planning applications for instance the proposed Gas Generator on the boundary with Colton. The Youth Council, populated by young people in the parish within school years 6 - 13, met monthly. Each Youth Councillor has been provided with a Council email address to be used for Youth Council matters. The Youth Council organised a successful fete linked to the Flower and Vegetable show in September 2018.

At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 3rd May 2018, Cllr Adam Billingsley was elected Chairman and Cllr Andy Dunn was elected Vice Chairman. Cllr Billingsley resigned in September 2018. Cllr Sylvia Gibson was elected Chairman on 4th October but resigned in January 2019. Cllr Andy Dunn was elected Chairman on 7th February 2019 with Cllr Billingsley being elected Vice Chairman on 7th March 2019.

The Parish Centre was open between 1pm and 3pm, Monday and Tuesday; 10am and Noon & 1pm and 3pm Wednesday and Thursday and closed to the public on Friday. As well as information leaflets, the office also has a store of free dog poop bags, provided by Stafford Borough Council.

Casual Vacancies on the Council.

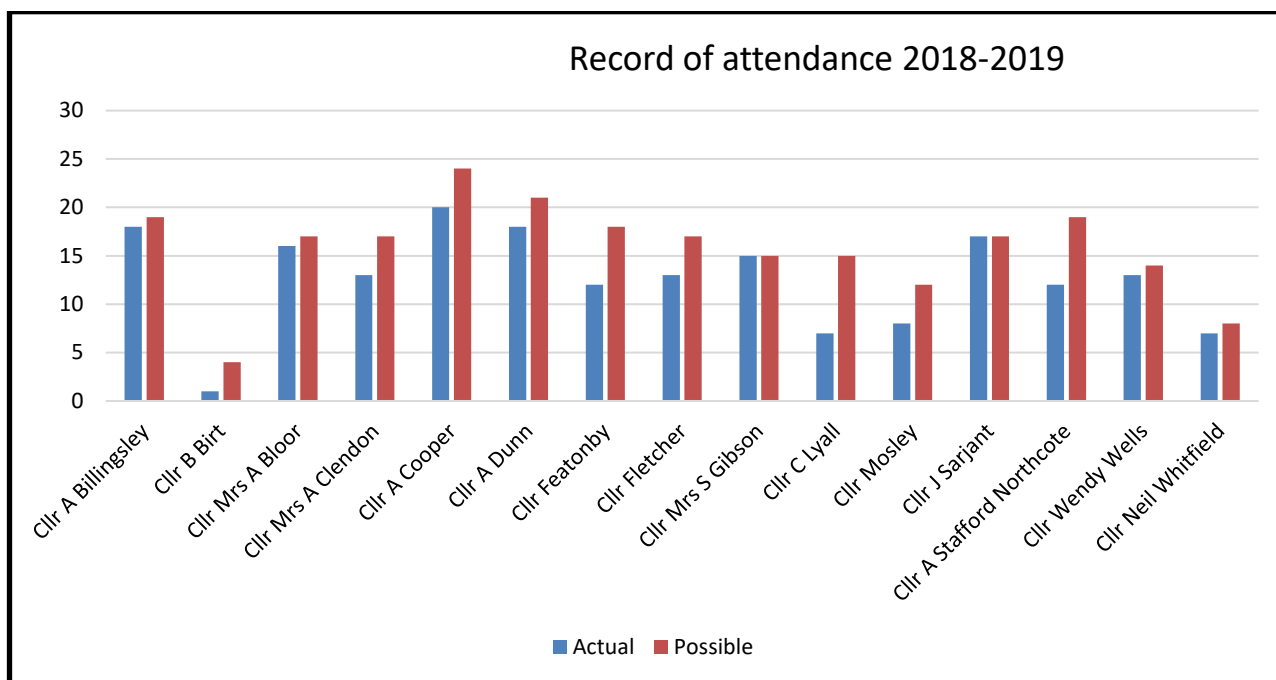
During the year, the council had a total of 4 vacancies caused by the resignations of Adam Billingsley (co-opted back onto the Council on 20th December 2018); Jim Sarjant and Sylvia Gibson. The Council also lost long time member Barrie Birt who sadly passed away in June 2018 to be replaced on 6th September by Neil Whitfield. Annette Bloor was co-opted onto the Council on 5th April 2018 to fill one of the 2017/18 casual vacancies. Two casual vacancies remained unfilled at the end of the reporting year.

Councillors*

Councillor	Ward	Address	Tel
Adam Billingsley (Vice Chairman)	Great Haywood	12 Essex Drive, Great Haywood, ST18 0RL	881666
Cllr Annette Bloor	Great Haywood	12 Manor Farm Road, Little Haywood ST18 0NW	881749
Anne Clendon	Great Haywood	5 Cliff Road, Great Haywood, ST18 0SZ	808214
Andrew Cooper	Great Haywood	7 Hunters Close, Great Haywood, ST18 0EF	881895
John Mosley	Great Haywood	17 Nursery Way, Great Haywood ST18 0FY	883440
Neil Whitfield	Great Haywood	22 Green Close, Great Haywood ST18 0WF	803191
Vacancy	Great Haywood		
Andrew Dunn (Chairman)	Little Haywood	19 Essex Drive, Great Haywood, ST18 0RL	808154
Jane Featonby	Little Haywood	7 Anson Row, Little Haywood, ST18 0UN	882073
Robert Fletcher	Little Haywood	Brough House, Main Road, Little Haywood ST18 0TR	881370
Catherine Lyall	Little Haywood	2, Chase View, Main Road, Little Haywood, ST18 0TU	881568
Amyas Stafford Northcote	Little Haywood	Bishton Hall, Wolseley Bridge, Stafford, ST17 0XN	883985
Wendy Wells	Little Haywood	Brampton, Main Road, Little Haywood. ST18 0TR	881626
Vacancy	Little Haywood		

*As at 31st March 2019

Councillor attendance at meetings



	TOTALS		% attendance
	Actual	Possible*	
Cllr Adam Billingsley	18	19	95
Cllr Barrie Birt**	1	4	25
Cllr Annette Bloor	16	17	94
Cllr Anne Clendon	13	17	76
Cllr Andy Cooper	20	24	83
Cllr Andy Dunn	18	21	86
Cllr Jane Featonby	12	18	67
Cllr Rob Fletcher	13	17	76
Cllr Sylvia Gibson	15	15	100
Cllr Cath Lyall**	7	15	47
Cllr John Mosley	8	12	67
Cllr Jim Sarjant	17	17	100
Cllr Amyas Stafford Northcote	12	19	63
Cllr Wendy Wells	13	14	93
Cllr Neil Whitfield	7	8	88
Total	190	237	80
*Possible meetings are Full Council plus other Committee meetings Cllrs agreed to attend and where they have substituted for another Councillor.			
** A dispensation was agreed for all/part of the year.			

Jubilee Playing Fields

The Parish Council owns and maintains the sports field, toilet block and play area. The Council maintains the site and the grass cutting within the children's play area and BMX track through the Lengthsmen. Maintenance of the toilet block is also undertaken by the Lengthsmen rather than through a contract as previously. The Lengthsmen ensure that the site is kept clear of litter and hazards. The lengthsmen installed a new recycled plastic fence around the children's play area over the winter period.



During the year, the Council's network of CCTV cameras at the JPF were able to identify a number of fly-tippers. The images, downloaded remotely by the Lengthsmen, were passed to the Clerk for onward transmission to Stafford Borough Council who issued Fixed Penalty Notices to the offenders. The CCTV network also recorded images of people causing criminal damage and other anti-social behaviour which were passed to Staffordshire Police.

Allotments

The Parish Council owns 3.7 acres of allotments, on Coley Lane, which it leases "en masse" to the Allotment Association who manage and operate the site. The Council continues to investigate other possible sites for allotments within the Parish. Ideally within the Great Haywood ward.

Parish Maintenance



The Parish Council is responsible for various grass areas in the Parish under contract from the County Council. These grass verges are maintained by the Council's Lengthsmen who are able to undertake far more cuts than would be the case if the areas remained with the County Highways. The Lengthsmen also maintain the grass outside the Parish Office and undertake regular litter picks across the parish. The Lengthsmen have cut back a number of hedges which were overgrowing the pavement not least along Coley Lane; Meadow Lane; Abbeyfields; Cliff Road and Oldfields Crescent. The Lengthsmen also maintain the Council's benches and noticeboards. The bench at the top of Mill Lane was refurbished and dedicated to the memory of Cllr Barrie Birt whilst Jodie and Chloe Morrall presented the Council with a bench, dedicated to their late father Alan Morrall, which was installed outside the Parish Office on St Marys Road. New Noticeboards have started to be installed across the parish with further ones to be installed in 2019/20.

Footpaths

The Parish Council works with local walking groups and in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council to investigate and resolve issues regarding rights of way. The County Council has made a number of improvements during the year following an approach by the Council.

Highways

The Lengthsmen undertake various minor highways works including sweeping the gutters and gullies and cleaning the drain grids to facilitate easier flow of surface water; keeping pavements clear of overgrowing grass/weeds and cleaning road signs.

Great Haywood Memorial Hall

The Council continues to work with local residents, the Memorial Hall Committee and the Surgery to investigate the creation of a footpath linking the Memorial Hall car park to the Surgery car park.

Newsletter

Four Newsletters were published by the Council and distributed by the Lengthsmen.

Planning

The Parish Council is a consultee for planning applications. The Planning Committee meets when a major planning application is received. The Parish Council does not have the power to make a decision on planning applications but can raise objections or concerns for consideration. These are returned to Stafford Borough Council along with any noticeable infringements on planning regulations.

Administration

The Parish is managed by a full-time Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer and a part-time Deputy Clerk / Finance Officer. Both of the Clerks hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration and are Principals of their Professional Body, the Society of Local Council Clerks. The Clerk is the Staffordshire representative on the Society's National Forum as well as a Midlands representative on the National Executive Committee of the Association of Local Council Clerks.

Quality Council

The Council continues to hold "Foundation Status" in the National Association of Local Councils award scheme. Work is ongoing towards Quality Council Status and eventually Gold Standard Status. However, this work has stalled as, due to the number of resignations in the year, the Council does not meet the qualifying criteria of having 2/3rds of its number elected.

Internal Examination

In his report on the 2018/19 accounts the independent Internal Examiner wrote:

"It is our opinion that the quality of governance and reporting demonstrated by your council is one of the leaders in the Staffordshire area and you are to be commended on your efforts."



Policies and Regulations

The current list of policies used by the Council, copies of which are available on the website, are:

Policy & Procedures

Policy Manual
 Standing Orders
 Committees (Members and Terms of Reference)
 Code Of Conduct
 Small Grants Policy
 Publication Scheme (Freedom Of Information)
 Financial Regulations
 Annual Risk Assessment
 Complaints Procedure
 Media Policy
 Business Statement
 Investment Policy
 Training Policy



Staff Handbook

Adoption Leave
 Annual Leave
 Bereavement
 Time off for Dependents
 Drugs and Alcohol
 Equal Opportunities
 Equal pay
 Flexible Working
 Gifts, Hospitality, Anti-Bribery
 Employment Legislation Guide
 Parental Leave
 Paternity Leave
 Maternity Leave
 Adoption Leave
 Protocol between Councillors and Officers
 Whistleblowing
 Disciplinary Policy
 Bullying & Harrassment
 Grievance
 Sickness Absence
 Display Screen Equipment

These policies are reviewed annually in either April or November by the Policy, Employment or Finance Committees. Updated versions will be added to the website as and when they are approved by the Full Council. The Youth Council's Constitution and Standing Orders policy documents are on the website.

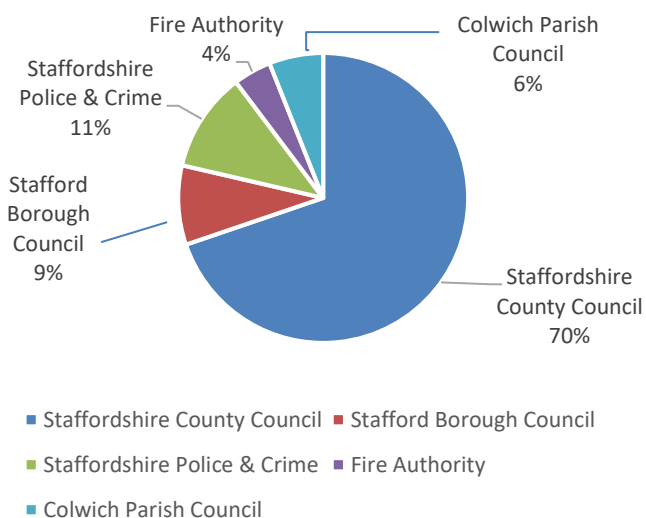
Grants

Grants and funding assistance applications are considered by the Full Council, who had a budget of £5,500 for the financial year 2018-19. Payments made during the year were as follows:

Twinning Association	£400	St Giles Hospice (In memory of Cllr Barrie Birt)	£1,000
G H Wednesday Club	£200	Stafford Ladies Over 30s Football Club (In memory of Cllr Barrie Birt)	£1,000
Under 5's Playgroup	£200	Colwich Parochial Church Council	£120
Haywoods Community Choir	£250		
		TOTAL	£3,170

FINANCE

Council Tax Summary 2018/19



The main form of income for the Parish Council is the precept demand which is included in the council tax from Stafford Borough Council. Stafford Borough Council also makes a payment to the Parish Council (called a concurrent function) every year which is used towards tasks undertaken by the Parish which mirror those that the Borough undertake in Stafford e.g. maintaining the JPF toilets. Stafford Borough Council also passed on the Government's Local Council Tax Support Grant amount of £5,220. These amounts are expected to be similar in 2019/2020.

Although it is the Borough Council that charges the council tax, it includes payments for the Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Staffordshire County Council and the Parish Council as well as for the Borough itself.

RESERVES

Reserves held at 31 March 2019 are as follows:

Reserve		Notes
Road Safety Reserve	£1,000	To support actions that will come out of work being undertaken by the Community Speed Watch.
Biodiversity Enhancement Reserve	£3,400	Work is in progress to develop the biodiversity policy based on reports received from Staffs Wildlife Trust.
Footpath Capital Reserve	£6,000	To repair Rights of Way footpaths.
Changing Room Block Reserve	£20,000	For furnishment of changing rooms.
Toilet Block Reserve	£10,000	To contribute towards new toilets at the JPF.
Surgery Path Reserve	£38,300	To install a path between the Great Haywood Memorial Hall car park and the surgery.
War Memorial Reserve	£6,750	To install a new joint war memorial for the parish.
Mill Lane Bridge Restr Reserve	£5,000	To install a traffic management system along Mill Lane.
Mill Lane Hedge/Pavement Reserve	£17,500	To install a pavement on Mill Lane linked to the proposed traffic management system.
Garden of Remembrance	£10,000	To install a Garden of Remembrance within the parish..
Parish Office Reserve	£5,000	To improve the Parish Centre to provide a reasonable working environment fit for the 21 st century.
Memorial Garden (EM)	£381	These funds are held for repairs to the Memorial Garden and do not belong to the Parish Council.
Allotments (EM)	£800	These funds are held for the Allotments Association.
Play Equip Repair/Replace	£40,263	To repair and replace equipment at the Jubilee Playing Fields. The council is also looking to take on a new open space from the District Council and provide new play equipment.
Election Fund	£10,800	To pay for elections to the Parish Council
TOTAL	£175,194	

(EM = ear marked)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2018/2019

BUDGET SUMMARY 2018/2019

Net expenditure

Description	2017/2018 (audited)	2018/2019 (unaudited)	2019/2020 (budget)
Staffing	£83,033	£85,839	£94,460
Community Engagement	£0	£150	£3,000
Parish Maintenance	£5,603	£2,152	£30,050
Footpaths	£0	£158	£0
Green Infrastructure	£0	£1,209	£2,000
Parish Centre	£2,188	£6,016	£7,390
Jubilee Playing Fields	£2,141	£6,887	£20,405
Allotments	£1,391	£1,389	£0
Grants (S137 payments)	£2,634	£2,170	£3,800
Other grants	£3,140	£1,000	£0
Ear Marked Reserves	£2,691	£6,935	£0
Other administration	£16,344	£76,680	£33,535
TOTAL	£119,165	£190,585	£194,640

Net Income

Description	2017/2018 (audited)	2018/2019 (unaudited)	2019/2020 (budget)
Precept	£171,656	£185,349	£189,360
Concurrent Function	£3,298	£3,298	£3,298
Local Council Tax Support Govt. Grant	£5,280	£5,280	£5,280
Other Income	£3,347	£6,991	£0
TOTAL	£183,581	£200,918	£197,938

	2017/2018 (audited)	2018/2019 (unaudited)	2019/2020 (budget)
Net Savings	£64,416	£10,333	£3,298