

Minutes for the meeting of Colyton Parish Council held on Monday 18th July 2022 at 7.00 pm in the Colyton Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs S Real, K Clifford, A Mills, A Parr, A Stenning, A Jarman, J Gardiner, J Hay, C Denny, R Turner and C Pady. Also S Haines (clerk)

Members of public: 1 + Mr and Mrs Thompson (Steering Group)

22/07/97 Receipt & Approval of apologies for absence. Cllr K Mills.

22/07/98 Declaration of Interests. None

22/07/99 Public Question time. Mrs Thompson who was present during the previous meeting stated that various comments were flying around toward the end of the meeting, some not very pleasant, she stated that the chair called the financial plan 'figures written on the back on an envelope' this was felt to be a rather rude response to a document which had taken a huge amount of consideration and work, would the chair like to apologise?

Cllr Parr replied that the comment was neither directed to or about Mrs Thompson, he stated that the figures could only be guesstimates and while in some cases they may be a good guess, they are still guesses therefore he will not be apologising.

Mrs Thompson then asked if Mr Parr would like to retract his comment

Cllr Parr replied that he would not, and commented that the complaint sent to Mr Gordon Lennox by Mrs Thompson was very one sided and did not show a true account of the conversation.

Mr Thompson stood and introduced himself as leader of the Steering Group (SG) he informed the Council that he is here to be approached at any time to help and answer any questions that may arise. He confirmed that the draft proposal has not yet been released as Henry Gordon Lennox is currently out of office. He confirmed that the next step is stage three which is a consultation framework between EDDC and the SG and EDDC and the CPC, this will also contain consultations around the boundary.

Cllr Pady stated that it is a great shame that a few have moved to the area and don't fully understand and appreciate the history of the Parish, so much damage can be done here and they have not grasped the enormity of what they are doing. He stated that over half of the eligible voters in did not express an opinion so how can this be allowed to go ahead? There will be a huge duplication of time and funds, we wish that the Parish remains together.

Cllr Parr asked a question about the figures, under the precept and expenditure there is a total figure of £49,000, what does that represent?

Mr Thompson replied that there is an operational budget of £18,000, this is 28% of the current budget, there is also money for a contingency plan, a launch budget which includes office stationary etc, it also includes £2,500.00 to establish a road traffic plan. This is based on advice from EDDC.

Cllr Parr asked where the money would come from?

Mr Thompson stated that it would be up to EDDC but confirmed that it would not be funded.

Cllr Denny stated that the CPC meets 23 times a year are we sometimes struggle to meet EDDC planning application deadlines for comments, if the new Colyford Village Council (CVC) is only meeting every two months, how will they ensure that all planning applications are commented on?

Mr Thompson answered that the draft proposal would need to be seen before he can answer that question fully but that is a concern to be aware of and will have to be considered carefully.

Mrs Thompson asked what percentage of planning applications are for Colyford?

Cllr Denny replied stating that it varies hugely, there are quite a few tree related applications, sometimes a lot and sometimes none! Southleigh PC have recently contacted us as they are having a real problem in the village whereby they are not getting their comments in on time for applications.

Cllr Denny then asked what the value is of the boundary line?

Cllr Pady confirmed that he drew it up as an arbitrary line for the Mayor and that it has no legal standing. A member of public challenged this stating that the map is in a book published in the 1800s by Roy Chapple.

Cllr Gardiner asked Mr Thompson if he should be a member of the CVRA and the SG as the CVRA could be seen as a pressure group which is not allowed. She went on to say that the report from EDDC does not give a balanced view, questionnaires were sent out to 801 eligible voters in Colyford, of those only 29%

were returned with a 'yes vote' how can that be seen as a majority in favour? The figures should be represented differently, the majority of the written responses were not in favour of the split.

Mr Thompson stated that he would not be pressured by anybody, he also stated that how the report is laid out is nothing to do with him and should be taken up with EDDC, The report shows that 56% of responses across the whole Parish were in favour of the split. The PC are welcome to go back to EDDC and challenge their decision, nothing is set in stone until stage three is completed.

Cllr Turner stated that more people would have filled out the survey if they had realised that that was their only opportunity for a vote, this was not explained well at all and has caused confusion.

Cllr A Mills stated that as a resident of Colyford, he gets approached by many residents who speak about this, he said generally there are two main groups, the first group are for the split because they believe they pay their Council tax which is then spent solely in Colyton and they don't use the amenities there. This is quite narrow minded as anybody can use the amenities in Colyton. The second group say they feel neglected by the CPC. They say the CPC don't spend any money in Colyford, this is simply not true, the CPC have been approached many times by the Colyford Hall Committee for example and grants have been given. This is not a neglected part of the country. Mainly people are really concerned and worried, at a time where there is so much worry, this is just adding to it and many people are elderly and vulnerable and cannot use technology to research and ask questions. Many people were excluded from the meetings which were held and that just added to the concern.

Mr Thompson stated that this whole process was started with a petition which received over 300 signatures, way over the required amount for the GR to go ahead, he agreed that speaking to people and listening is really important and clearly there is a lot more needing to be done, EDDC have a lot of work to do regarding the boundary, people felt they would have more control and pride in their village if they had their own Council.

Mrs Thompson asked what Colyford would miss if the split went ahead.

Cllr Parr listed the amenities including allotments, use of the cemetery at the Parish rate, play park, none of this is mentioned in any of the documents sent out by the SG

Cllr A Mills mentioned that the CPC was the only Council to reduce its Council tax this year to try to help the parishioners.

Cllr Pady voiced concern over volunteers coming forward, the Councillor positions will need to be filled and remain filled, there may be enthusiasm now but it may die down.

Cllr A Mills stated that the risk does not seem to be balanced with the rewards, if the CVC does not succeed, it will just get absorbed in the district council who have no money at all to support the village.

Mr Thompson stated that there is an opportunity in stage three to put all these thoughts across and think about what the CPC would do differently.

Cllr A Mills asked Mr Thompson what he would do to improve the CPC

Mr Thompson replied that there would need to be a review of the governance of the Council, more transparency is needed where the finances are involved, 28% of the precept should be ring-fenced for Colyford and spent in Colyford to make the village nicer.

Cllr Gardiner stated that there are 4 Councillors who are on this Council who live in Colyford, the voting has never been purposely against Colyford. She stated that she has been on the Council for 3.5 years and cannot remember anything that Colyford has asked for being rejected.

Cllr Real agreed stating that he has very strong personal family ties to Colyford and finds it deeply upsetting when he hears that 'Colyton doesn't care about Colyford.'

22/07/00 Colyford Governance Review. Cllr Gardiner stated that there was a unanimous decision by 8 cabinet members to support the recommendation to proceed with the GR. Cllr Parr stated that the EDDC legal department helped the SG a great deal with advice and information, the issue is it was that same team who made the recommendation to proceed which simply is not allowed and the Councillors at the meeting should have picked up on that. Cllr Denny proposed that the CPC accept the decision made by EDDC but that certain details be challenged, this was seconded by Cllr Stenning and agreed by all bar one abstention. The Boundary

Mr Thompson confirmed that the draft proposal has not been published yet and this may contain a revised boundary.

Cllr Parr agreed but stated that the CPC should get ahead of the game here. Cllr Real proposed that Cllrs Parr, Clifford and Denny work together to produce a couple of maps to bring back to the CPC to decide on one to be submitted as a suggestion to EDDC, this was seconded by Cllr Gardiner and agreed by all.

22/07/01 Matters to be taken into Committee.

22/07/02 Matters brought to the Chairs attention after the agenda had been published. The handyman has been asked to do the gardens with the help of Nick Weldon, Mr Weldon has agreed but has asked for a cash payment of £100.00. He helps Arthur a lot and never asks for payment. It was agreed to pay Mr Weldon the £100.00 to help with the gardens, the handyman will need to take note of how many hours Mr Weldon does and this needs to be reported back to the Council so they can decide if more should be paid. This was a proposal made by Cllr Clifford, seconded by Cllr Real and agreed by all bar Cllr Parr who declared an interest and did not vote.

22/07/03 Dates of future meetings.

Committee meetings – Monday 25th July

Full CPC – Monday 8th August.

Meeting closed: 20:30.

DRAFT