



YARNFIELD AND COLD MEECE PARISH COUNCIL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

17 June at 7.30pm,
Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declaration of Interest
1. Public Question Time (30 minutes)
Anyone who wants to ask a question during the public question time session should contact the Parish Clerk by 12 noon on Saturday 15 June, 2024.
2. Reports from Borough and County Councillors
3. Minutes of the annual meeting held on Wednesday 15 May, 2024
Correction to the annual meeting re the asset register
4. Minutes of the general meeting held on Wednesday 15 May, 2024
5. Parish Action Tracker – review of actions
6. Annual Parish Assembly – report
7. Annual Audit and Governance Submission
8. Councillor vacancy – arrangements to co-opt a new councillor
9. Yarnfield bus shelter – update on insurance claim and replacement
10. Parish Clerk's report:
 - a. Budget – update and schedule of payments
 - b. Parish Clerk – mobile phone contact
 - c. Update on actions taken
11. Labour in Vain Working Group – update report
12. Neighbourhood Plan – update and next actions
13. Updates from Parish Councillors
14. Planning – to consider any planning applications in the parish
15. Forward Plan and Events Calendar

John Fraser
Clerk to the Parish Council
Date: 12 June, 2024

Forward Plan

Date	Event	Location
Meetings		
1 July, 7.30pm	YCM Cllr Informal Briefing	TBC
10 July, 7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
16 July, 7.30pm	Community Action Group	Village Hall
August		
29 August, 7.30pm	YCM Cllr Informal Briefing	TBC
September		
2 September, 7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
Events		
23 June, 2024, 3pm – 5pm	Strawberry Tea	Village Hall
14 July, 2024, 1pm – 4pm	Parish Picnic	Village Green

Planning applications

Reference	Nil
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DRAFT MINUTES

YARNFIELD AND COLD MEECE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday 15 May 2024

Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

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

Councillors:

Dave Beeston

Sally Parkin (Chairperson)

Margaret Broader

Kirsty Treen

Stella Hughes

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

Public at the meeting: 1

Viewing on Facebook: 3

Election of the Chairperson of the Council

- 24-1 Cllr Parkin was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Treen, and agreed by all present.

Election of the Vice-Chair of the Council.

- 24-2 Cllr Treen was proposed by Cllr Broader, seconded by Cllr Hughes, and agreed by all present.

Apologies for Absence

- 24-3 Apologies were received from – Cllr Ed Whitfield, Cllr Pert (SCC) and Cllr James (SBC)

Declaration of Interest

- 24-4 Nil

Community Action Group appointments – Chairperson, councillor representative and non-elected members

- 24-5 Cllr Hughes was proposed by Cllr Parkin, seconded by Cllr Broader and agreed by all present to take on the role of Chair of the Community Action Group.
- 24-6 Cllr Broader was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Parkin and agreed by all present to be the second councillor on the committee.
- 24-7 The non-elected members of the Community Action Group have each indicated their willingness to continue for a further 12 months.

Planning – Lead councillor

- 24-8 Cllr Whitfield has confirmed to the clerk that he would be willing to continue in this role.
- 24-9 Cllr Whitfield was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Beeston and agreed by all present to take on the role of planning lead for the council.

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Finance – Lead councillor

- 24-10 Cllr Broader was proposed by Cllr Parkin, seconded by Cllr Hughes and agreed by all present to take on the role of planning lead for the council.

Events Working Group – councillor member

- 24-11 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:
- i. the chairperson of the Events Working Group be confirmed by the Group.
 - ii. Cllr Parkin, Cllr Treen and the Clerk to attend meetings of Events Working Group.

External bodies – appointment of representatives

- 24-12 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the following appointments were agreed:
- Springfields First School: Cllr Treen
 - Yarnfield Park Residents' Association: Cllr Treen.
 - Yarnfield Park Conference Centre: Clerk
 - BIFFA: Cllr Beeston
 - Village Hall Committee: Cllr Beeston

HS2 – SRCG representation and support

- 24-13 The Government announced on 4 October 2023 that HS2 Phase 2a and b had been cancelled. HS2 Ltd were instructed to work with the Department for Transport to develop a programme of activity to close down Phase 2a in a safe, respectful, orderly and efficient manner. It was also instructed to dispose of the land acquired by HS2 Ltd. The parish council is concerned that until the disposal of this land has been completed there is a significant risk to the parish and that the council should continue receiving advice and support from the Stone Railway Campaign Group (SRCG).

- 24-14 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:
- i. The SRCG continues to advise the Council on matters relating to the HS2 development.
 - ii. A representative from the SRCG be invited to attend future meetings of the Council to advise on the HS2 development.
 - iii. Cllr Hughes and Cllr Broader agreed to represent the Council on the SRCG.

General Powers of Competence – annual review of eligibility

- 24-15 At the June 2022 meeting of the Parish Council [minute 22-296] the council resolved to adopt the general power of competence and in so doing confirmed it met the eligibility criteria for adoption.
- 24-16 To continue to rely on the General Power of Competence the Parish Council must, at every Annual Meeting that falls in the year of a parish council election, confirm that it still meets the eligibility criteria.
- 24-17 **Resolution:** It was resolved:
- i. That the parish council continues to meet the criteria for adoptions.
 - ii. To adopt the General Power of Competence.

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Review and re-adoptions of key documents

24-18 Financial Regulations

- A new model set of financial regulations has been published in May 2024 by National Association of Local Councils. The parish council's financial regulations need to be updated to include changes introduced in the new model regulations.

24-19 Risk Register:

- The register has been updated to take on board minor administrative changes:
 - The formation of the Yarnfield and Cold Meece Community Ltd.
 - An explanation as to why HS2 continues to present a risk to the parish.

24-20 No changes have been made to:

- Standing Orders
- Asset Register
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act policies and procedures
- Publication Scheme

24-21 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:

- i. The updated Financial Regulations is brought to the July 2024 meeting of the council.
- ii. The changes to the risk register are approved.
- iii. The other procedures set out in minute number 24-17 are approved unchanged.

Signed

Chairperson of the Parish Council

Date: 17 June 2023

Meeting closed 7:46 pm

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YARNFIELD AND COLD MEECE PARISH COUNCIL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday 15th May 2024

Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

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

Councillors:

David Beeston

Sally Parkin (Chairperson)

Margaret Broader

Kirsty Treen

Stella Hughes

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

Public at the meeting: 1

Viewing live on Facebook: 3

Apologies for Absence

24-22 Apologies were received from – Cllr Ed Whitfield, Cllr Pert (SCC) Cllr Roy James (SBC).

Declaration of Interest

24-23 Declarations of interest were received from Cllr Beeston and Cllr Broader in relation to the village hall planning application.

24-24 Cllr Mrs Hughes, asked for clarification on whether she should declare an interest in relation to the village hall planning application as she lives next to the hall.

24-25 The council may grant a dispensation to a councillor who discloses a pecuniary or other interest in an item on the meeting's agenda to participate in any discussion and to vote on the matter if it consider that so many members of the council have disclosed an interest that it would impede the transaction of the business.

24-26 **Resolution:** It was resolved to grant a dispensation to Cllr. Hughes.

Public Question Time

Parking on Pavements

24-27 A question has been received about what can be done to prevent cars from parking on pavements thereby causing a danger to pedestrians. The question relates specifically to Caversham Way and Colliford Drive.

Response

24-28 The question of road safety and danger cause by vehicles parking on pedestrian pavements is essentially a matter for the police to deal with.

24-29 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the complaint be referred to the local PCSO to investigate.

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Reports from Borough and County Councillors

24-30 Nil

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22 April, 2024

24-31 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 22 April 2024. were approved as a correct record of the meeting subject to the correction of grammatical errors.

Parish Action Tracker – review of actions

24-32 Minute Number 23-718 Bus Shelter

- Insurance claim for replacement of the shelter has been send to the council's insurance company. The replacement cost is likely to be more than £4,000 to remove and replace with a similar shelter.

24-33 Minute Number 23-291 Highway Repairs

- A report being prepared by HS2 Ltd / Staffordshire County Council Highways report is still awaited.

24-34 Minute Number 23-296 Homes Plus – estate management

- Work on the pavements, root damage and perished brickwork is scheduled to start 4 June, 2024.

24-35 21-499 Severn Trent

- Complaint referred to Asset Planning Lead (Waste Networks) West Midlands who has confirmed the complaint has been escalated internally and is now waiting on a response.

24-36 21-499 Highlows Lane – Yellow Lines

Works scheduled to be done on the 22 May, 2024.

24-37 22-97 New Office System

- Staffordshire County Council charge £100 for the switch to a .gov.uk domain name. This work will need to be done through a registered JISC registered domain registrar.
- Staffordshire County Council only operate 1 template for parish council websites and will be happy to discuss upgrades to the council's website.

24-38 A copy of the Update of Actions Report set out in Appendix 1 and posted on the parish council website was noted.

24-39 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the clerk:

- Works with the Digital Team at Staffordshire County Council to move the parish council website to a gov.uk domain name.
- Produces a report setting out a plan, with costings, for the upgrade of the parish council's website.

Yarnfield Park Residents' Group – update report

24-40 Cllr Treen provided an update on the work of the Yarnfield Park Residents' Group:

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- i. Barratts West Midlands are still working to form a Residents' management company and a further meeting has been asked for by the Residents' group to discuss the implications of this proposal.
- ii. The grounds maintenance contractor has failed to maintain the site in line with the agreement. This has generated numerous complaints from the residents which have been referred to Barratts West Midlands.

Community Action Group – update report

24-41 Cllr Hughes provided an update on the Community Action Group meeting held on 23 April, 2024.

- i. A letter of thanks has been received from the MS society for the £250 donation made by the council. A copy of the letter will be sent to the coordinator of the sting organisation from whom the defibrillator was received.
- ii. No response has been received from Midland Heart about the request to site a defibrillator on their land.
- iii. The Community Action Group has agreed to buy 6 litter picking hoops.
- iv. Preparation of the strawberry tea are being made by the group.
- v. The group has agreed to purchase summer bedding and compost as soon as possible for the various displays in the parish.

24-42 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the Community Action Group budget is used to:

- i. Purchase 6 litter picking hoops at a cost of £72.00
- ii. Spend up to £200 on summer bedding and compost

Parish Clerk's report:

24-43 The Schedule of invoices awaiting payment for the period 23 April - 15 May, 2024 = £2,602.13.

24-44 The current account bank reconciliation on 15 May, 2024, after taking into account outstanding payments and transfers, was £1,154.23.

24-45 **Resolution:** It was resolved that:

- i. The schedule of payment for the period 22 April – 15 May 2024, set out in Appendix 2, is approved.

Update on actions taken

- i. A request has been sent to Stone Rural Parish Council for a meeting to discuss issues relating to the condition of Yarnfield Lane.
- ii. An email has been sent to the planning enforcement team at Stafford Borough Council planners about concerns over the Blue Iris development on Yarnfield Lane.
- iii. The spring edition of the parish newsletter has been prepared and distributed to households in the parish.
- iv. A letter has been sent to the residents of Greenside and Furlong overlooking the southern section of the village green about plans to plant 6 oak trees on the village green.
- v. An email has been sent to BIFFA thanking them for the donation of 10 apple trees.

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- vi. The old rose bushes at the Cold Meece memorial garden have been replaced with new rose bushes.
- vii. The Events Working Group met on 9th May, 2024 to agree progress with the calendar of events. A detailed report to the next parish council meeting will be prepared setting out costs for the summer picnic.
- viii. An application has been made to the council's Bank to revise the bank mandate to include a third signatory on each of the accounts.

Labour in Vain Working Group – update report

- 24-46 Yarnfield and Cold Meece Community Ltd. have been contacted by Barton Community Benefit Society, Oxfordshire, who are in the process of trying to buy their village pub from Stonegate. Their experience is similar to that of the Labour in Vain: Stonegate has overvalued their pub and is refusing to negotiate with the community over the valuation.
- 24-47 The Barton Community Benefit Society (BCBS) are looking to set up a pressure group made of parish councils and community groups who are experiencing similar problems with Stonegate.
- 24-48 The date for the final round of the Community Ownership Fund application is yet to be published.
- 24-49 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the Yarnfield and Cold Meece Community Ltd be asked to consider the request to support the work of the BCBS.

Neighbourhood Plan – update and next actions

- 24-50 The end of grant report for the 2023 grant awarded by Groundwork has been submitted.
- 24-51 The amount of grant available to support neighbourhood plan development is limited to £10,000. Since the start of this project the parish council has received 3 grants with a total value of £7,210:
- NPG-12261 £1,435
 - NPG-13049 £4,735
 - NPG-13709 £2,625
- 24-52 A new round of neighbourhood planning grant has recently been announced.
- 24-53 The revision of the Master Plan has been completed. The revised document is now being reviewed by a senior officer at AECOM before it is sent to the parish council.
- 24-54 **Resolution:** It was resolved that the clerk:
- i. Contact Urban Vision to agree the 2024 work programme and identify any costs associated with this work.
 - ii. Apply to Groundwork for a grant to fund this work.

Updates from Parish Councillors

- 24-55 Nil

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Planning – to consider any planning applications in the parish

9 Ashdale Park, Yarnfield

Reference	24/39029/LDCPP
Application Received	17 April, 2024
Proposal	Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed single storey rear extension

- 24-56 The application for a lawful development certificate is provided for information only. The application was previously approved by Stafford Borough Council.

64 Ford Drive, Yarnfield

Reference	24/38978/LDCPP
Application Received	08 April, 2024
Proposal	Proposed 2m heigh fence to front of property, adjacent to the highway

- 24-57 The application for a lawful development certificate is provided for information only. The application was previously refused by Stafford Borough Council.

19 Ladybower Way, Yarnfield

Reference	24/38996/HOU
Application Received	Thu 11 Apr 2024
Proposal	Proposed single storey rear extension. first floor front extension

- 24-58 **Resolution:** It was resolved to send a no comment response to Stafford Borough Council.

Yarnfield Village Hall, Yarnfield

Reference	24/38681/FUL
Application Received	Tue 30 Jan 2024
Proposal	Extend and remodel the existing entrance to create a new entrance to the Village Hall.

- 24-59 **Resolution:** It was resolved to send a no comment response to Stafford Borough Council.

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Forward Plan

24-60 The forward plan for meetings was noted.

Date and time of next meeting

- Parish Assembly – 21 May, 2024 at 7.30pm
- Parish Council Meeting – 17 June, 2024 at 7.30pm





Signed

Chairperson of the Parish Council




Date: 17 June 2024

Meeting closed 8.45pm



Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		 Warning	 Action – in progress	 Achieved
March 2024		1	13	0
April 2024		1	12	1
May 2024		0	13	1
Minute	Resolution	Action		RAG
Ambition 1 - Environment				
21-524	Village Green Project	<p>Proposed lease advertised by Stafford Borough Council.[06/06/24]. Heads of Terms now to be prepared. Referred YCM-PC concerns about the condition of tree on the village green to SBC</p> <p>Meeting with Stafford Borough Council officer [10/01/24]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on lease still with legal services - New section 106 fund application to be refreshed and resubmitted to Stafford Borough Council <p>Meeting with officer leading this work set for Wednesday 15 November, 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instruction to prepare lease sent to solicitors - Existing lease to be incorporated into the new lease - Pepper corn rent to be charged for the lease <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, 2023.</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>		





Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		<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> <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			
23-718	Bus Shelter	<p>Insurance Claim agreed by Avia Insurance [31/05/24]</p> <p>Insurance claim for replacement of the shelter send to AVIVA. Replacement cost likely to be in excess of £4,000 to remove and replace with a similar shelter [14/05/24]</p> <p>Damage to the bus shelter reported to the council’s insurance company. [16/02/24]</p>	
23-291	Highway Repairs	<p>Letter sent to HS2 by Cllr Parking requesting a meeting with HS2 Ltd on the Yarnfield Lane site. [16/06/24]</p> <p>Waiting for the completion of the HS2 Ltd / Staffordshire County Council Highways report.</p> <p>Continue to liaise with Cllr Parry over repairs and receiving a copy of the report.</p> <p>Request for a meeting with Stone Rural PC sent to their clerk – to be considered at their next meeting on the 16/05/24.</p> <p>Chase Cllr Parry and HS2 Ltd Community & Stakeholder Engagement Officer for a copy of the report.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd and Staffordshire County Council Highways compiling a report on several problem sites. It is hoped the report will identify work needed to resolve problems on Yarnfield Lane. [22-04/24]</p>	


Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		<p>Site meeting with Cllr Parry 20 April, 2024.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd authorise work to clear the road gullies in the vicinity of the HS2 compound – no noticeable improvement</p> <p>Email sent to Cllr Ian Parry [4/03/2024]. Meeting being arranged.</p> <p>Email exchange with HS2 Ltd about the council's dissatisfaction with their refusal to accept responsibility for the state of the lane and flooding. [13/03/24]</p> <p>Site visit and video evidence collected and sent to HS2 Ltd [15/03/24]</p> <p>Potholes marked up to be repaired by Staffordshire County Council [10/11/23].</p> <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	<p>Repair work to the walls and pavements on Greenside started [04/06/24]</p> <p>Work on the pavements, root damage and perished brickwork scheduled to start 4 June, 2024.</p> <p>Email sent to Homes Plus asking for a meeting to review progress with the footpath repairs.[8/05/24]</p> <p>Homes Plus onsite – work on hedges and pavements underway. [14/02/23]</p> <p>Email from Homes Plus – work scheduled to start February 2024</p> <p>Site meeting with Homes Plus [18 October 23] Agreed to deal with maintenance and repair issues Greenside and The Furlong. Awaiting response from Homes Plus officer.</p> <p>Contact made with Homes Plus Estate Management Team Lead. Meeting with estate walk to be confirmed.</p>	
21-499	Severn Trent work Highlows/Yarnfield Lane	<p>New contact identified. No response received from meeting request. Escalating the call to receive an update on progress to the Asset Planning Lead (Waste Networks)</p> <p>New STWCo lead officer for this work has been appointed. Request to meet sent. [18/03/24]</p> <p>Telephone contact with Waste Network Team Manager– evaluation and options report being prepared. Further work needed to establish whether the Highlows Lane junction is the symptom of a bigger problem of the cause of the problem. Meeting to be arranged for the new year.</p> <p>Meeting with Asset Planning Lead (Waste Networks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - STWCo looking to find solution that is represents value for money and is achievable given the physical constraints and doesn't move the problem to a different location on the location. - Possible schemes referred to STWCo hydrologists to undertaken assessment of the schemes' suitability. 	




Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		<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>	
21-499	Highlows Lane – Yellow Lines	<p>Work complete [22/06/24]</p> <p>Work scheduled to resume on 22 May, 2024.</p> <p>Community Traffic Management Officer – asked for date work will be resumed</p> <p>Email sent to Community Highway Engagement Officer [18/03/24]</p> <p>Outstanding work to finish the painting of the Yellow Lines at the junction reported to Staffordshire County Council with a request to complete the work asap</p>	
Parish Ambition – 3 Community			
23-550	Village Hall defibrillator	<p>Meeting of Defibrillator project group – plan of action agreed [23/05/24]</p> <p>Community Action Group to identify the costs of replacing the battery and pads on the village hall G3 defibrillator and whether a more cost-effective option would be to replace the unit with a fully automatic G5 unit.</p>	
23-323	Defibrillator project	<p>Meeting of Defibrillator project group – plan of action agreed [23/05/24]</p> <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>	
23-267	Labour in Vain - Community Ownership Fund Round 3	<p>Yarnfield and Cold Meece community Ltd has reached a point in their work to buy the Labour in Vain where the owners are not prepared to move to a sale price that reflects the true value of the pub. The government's decision,</p>	

Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		<p>prompted by the general election, to suspension the COF programme and the challenge of not having a clear line of sight to acquisition with an agreed price has become an unsurmountable problem. The working group has agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to not submit a Community Ownership Fund application at the end of June 2024. - to written everyone who pledged financial support and the wider group setting out why this decision has been made. - To continue to maintain contact with the agent owner. <p>Update and action planning meeting with Plunkett Foundation [7/03/24]</p> <p>Bid to buy the Labour in Vain rejected by Stonegate.</p> <p>Application to Community Ownership Fund put on hold – further work to secure pledges needed and for Stonegate to their view that the Labour in Vain and associated cap park has a value of at least £500k</p> <p>Application for the membership of the Plunkett Foundation secured</p> <p>Application for the registration of the Community Benefit Society prepared based on the Plunkett Foundation model standards</p> <p>Closing date for Community Ownership Fund application – 31 January 2024</p> <p>Plunkett Foundation support for the project secured. Dates of meeting with PF advisor circulated to members of the working group.</p> <p>Valuation of the Labour in Vain commissioned by the parish council.</p> <p>Working group meeting agreed that the formation of a Community Business Society will be the best approach to secure a Community Ownership grant.</p> <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 2013.</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>	
22-47	Firing Range	<p>Meeting with Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire Police [22/01/24]</p> <p>Planning permission for the new range in Stafford approved.</p>	

Monthly Progress Tracker – Update 15/05/2024

		<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>Price for new gates included in 2024 budget. Cost limitations will mean the project will need to be phased over several years.</p> <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>	
Parish Ambition – 4 Good Governance			
23-540	Business Continuity Plan	<p>Continuity Plan Template prepared with examples. – Cllrs invited to comment on the template before it is populated [18/03/24]</p> <p>A detailed plan of action covering all aspect of parish council business is to be prepared</p> <p>A contact list for individuals and organisation is to be prepared.</p>	
22-97	New Office Systems	<p>Staffordshire County Council have confirmed they charge £100 for the work</p> <p>The Cabinet Office are encouraging all local councils to move over the .go.uk domain for their website and Cllr/staff email addresses. Clerk attended a free training session sponsored by the Cabinet Office. A small grant of up to £100 is available to help with the cost of the transition.</p> <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>	



YARNFIELD AND COLD PARISH assembly COUNCIL MEETING

28 May, 2024

2

Priorities for the next 3 years

Focus Area	Area of concern	Action/time
Public Footpaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpath maintenance - liaise with landowners and Borough Council to improve paths around the village • Public footpath way signs 	
Pavements and roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement Safety – concern about the general state of pavements on Yarnfield Lane, Ford Drive and other areas 	
Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarnfield Lane • Flood prevention • Problem with the state of the roads after tractors have used them • Encourage the community to report issues around potholes, flooding, pavements, gutter sweeping, drain cleaning, grass cutting and edging. • Speeding outside the school 	
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yarnfield Park - Greenside • Condition of the village post office car park • Obstruction of Yarnfield Lane by visitors attending tournaments to Wellbeing Park. 	
Nuisance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firing rang • Wellbeing Park – car parking • WAR Events • Problem of noise Conference Centre 	

Focus Area	Area of concern	Action/time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour • Security Cameras 	
Open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of green spaces • More play equipment on the village green, adventure type equipment for children 9 years+ • Continue management of the green open space to improve environment for wildlife (trees, bushes, flowers), families (benches and picnic tables), children (play equipment, goal posts, rounders pitch) • More waste bins on Yarnfield Park 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could a local football team make use of the football field next to the MUGA, on Yarnfield Parkway 	
Labour in Vain		
Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote work and events more widely Cold Meece to be included 	
Priorities for the next 20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surround Yarnfield with a ring of green belt half a mile wide to prevent future encroachment on the heart of the village • Future of the old polo field (Sports ground at YP) • More community events uniting whole village e.g. continuing the summer fair • Engaging with youngsters getting them to 'own' the village. • Rationalise maintenance contracts 	



Black Rose Solutions Limited

74 Leacroft Road
Penkridge
Staffs
ST19 5BU

0781 321 7576
sandie.morris@blackrosesolutions.co.uk

5th June 2024

Dear John,

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council – Internal Audit 2023/24

I confirm that I have carried out an examination of your accounts and procedures, in line with the Practitioners Guide 2023 and in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. (See additional note on next page about the role of internal audit.)

I can state that I found no material errors, omissions or irregularities in your financial records and I have no significant concerns about your internal control procedures.

Please refer to the enclosed report for further details of the audit work covered.

I would also confirm that I am totally independent of your Council and have no contact with any Member or employee.

Yours sincerely,

S MORRIS

Mrs Sandra Morris ACMA

Enc
Summary of Findings
Note about Scope of Internal Audit
Full Internal Audit Report

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Registered Address : 74 Leacroft Road, Penkridge, Staffs, ST19 5BU



Summary of Findings

Comments marked **REC** denote an issue recommended for action as it may affect the Internal Audit response on the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accounting Return).

Comments marked **note** are included for reference or information.

Items referenced **FR** – relates to clause in the council's financial regulations.

Items reference **PG** – relates to a clause in the practitioners Guide.

C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES
PG.C.3 • Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for monitoring play areas, open spaces and sports pitches: such reviews should be undertaken by appropriately qualified external inspectors or, if by officers or members, that they have received the appropriate training and accreditation	ok*
Play areas are inspected annually by a certified provider. More regular, interim inspections are performed by the clerk. The council should consider whether additional training/accreditation may be appropriate.	note
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	YES
PG.D.2 • Ensure that budget reports are prepared and submitted to Authority / Committees periodically during the year with appropriate commentary on any significant variances	ok*
Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council?	yes*
The council formally considers the actual spend against budget at the half year point and as part of the budget/precept process. The council could consider performing a more regular, quarterly review in line with the practitioners guide. PG 5.27 • review progress against the budget regularly throughout the year - at least quarterly in all but exempt authorities - including a year end projection and a clear minuted commentary of likely significant variances from the budget;	note



Black Rose Solutions Limited

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES
PG.H.1 • Ensure that the Authority is maintaining a formal asset register and updating it routinely to record new assets at historic cost price, net of VAT and removing any disposed of / no longer serviceable assets	**
PG.H.3 • Ideally, the register should identify for each asset the purchase cost and, if practicable, the replacement / insured cost, the latter being updated annually and used to assist in forward planning for asset replacement	**
The council values items on the asset register at acquisition value, rather than cost. This is not the most common way of valuing assets, but IS within the guidance. The council may consider adding fields for "purchase price" and "insurance value" is helpful.PG2.27 Authorities need to apply a reasonable approach to asset valuation which is consistent from year to year.PG5.63. The particular method of asset valuation is not specified in proper practices so authorities may use any reasonable approach to be applied consistently from year to year. The method of asset valuation adopted should be set out in a policy approved by the authority and recorded in the authority's minutes and in the asset register.	note



Note about purpose and scope of Internal Audit and improving councillor oversight.

I would draw your attention to the Practitioners Guide

4.4. It is not the purpose of either internal or external audit to detect or prevent fraud.

4.8. essential competencies to be sought from any internal audit service should include: understanding the role of internal audit in reviewing systems rather than undertaking detailed checks that are more appropriately the responsibility of management.

As your Internal auditor I review and test the systems of control, this will be through examining procedure documents, discussion with staff and examining a selection of transactions, reconciliations, approvals, publications etc.

I examine, test and report on risks based on my understanding of the council's operations, my knowledge of statutory requirements, best practice and issues that have arisen elsewhere – and anything else that my instincts lead me towards. The Practitioners Guide contains a lot of information about this.

This means there is a chance that I will detect errors and frauds, but there can be no guarantee. There is a better chance that I will identify an opportunity to improve your control procedures.

For example - the only way for me to detect that a councillor who has approved an invoice or a reconciliation has not *properly* checked it (perhaps just signed on trust or a brief glance) is if I find a discrepancy. If I do not find a discrepancy, it does not guarantee that it was checked properly – but I have to trust that the signature is in line with the policy.

The best chance of a council detecting errors and frauds is by councillors and staff being vigilant and maintaining an enquiring mind about all financial transactions.

It is never an act of mistrust to ask for clarification or to seek further assurance.

It is too easy to “leave it to the expert” and feel silly for asking. It is essential that enough councillors understand the financial operations of the council and training should be sought if this is not the case.

Some simple examples of things that I check – and could also be checked by councillors (even occasional check of this nature can assist in detecting fraud or error).

Opening/Closing Balances - When reviewing accounts, bank statements, reconciliations, you should check the closing balance on the previous statement matches the opening balance on this one. Check that the balances agree to an official document from the bank, print from the system etc. Check back to an online statement if you have access.

Sequential Numbering - for sales receipts, invoices, cheques – verify that there are no numbers missing from the sequence – if so, seek explanation.

Transaction details – make sure that invoice details match the payment details and the bank statement details. For new/unknown/irregular suppliers also verify the details from a secondary source – website, companies house, VAT number checker etc.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. NO PETTY CASH HELD			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

02/06/2024

S. MORRIS ACMA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

05/06/2024

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note:** If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	19,984	44,417	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	25,898	26,691	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	24,856	11,365	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	9,068	9,718	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	17,253	37,507	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	44,417	35,249	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	44,417	35,249	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	76,741	77,241	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

Your wellbeing is our business



New Councillor Vacancy Yarnfield Ward



Could you help to make a difference in our community?



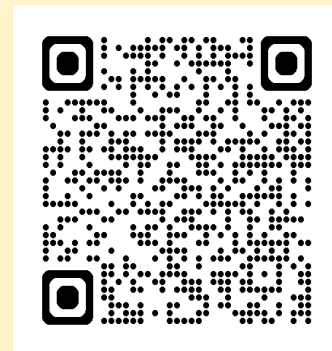
Would you be willing to share your skills, experience and time?



Do you have views about how the parish should develop?

Details about the role of a councillor and the application form are available on the parish council website.

Closing date: Noon on Friday 5 July, 2024



For an informal discussion about the vacancy and the commitment of being a parish councillor please contact one of the parish councillors or the clerk. Contact details can be found on the website.

Email: ycmclerk@gmail.com

Tel: 07786 948104

Parish Clerk's budget report

1. The Schedule of invoices awaiting payment for the period
16 May – 17 June, 2024 = **£1,739.74.**

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council						
Schedule of Payments - June 2023						
Date	Ref/Chq	Payee	Description	NET	VAT	Payment
17/06/2024	BACS	Clerk	Salary	647.79		647.79
17/06/2024	BACS	HMRC	PAYE payment	162.00		162.00
17/06/2024	BACS	Black Rose Solutions Ltd	Internal Audit	105.00	21.00	126.00
17/06/2024	BACS	SPCA	Training Course - Planning	25.00	5.00	30.00
17/06/2024	BACS	SPCA	Training Course - Planning	25.00	5.00	30.00
17/06/2024	BACS	BBB Castle Hire	Summer Picnic inflatables part payment	250.00		250.00
17/06/2024	BACS	Village Hall Committee	Parish Council hire	132.00		132.00
17/06/2024	BACS	Clr Parkin	Lunch Club expenses	126.24		126.24
17/06/2024	BACS	Clr Hughes	CAG expenses - summer bedding	151.99	20.00	171.99
17-Jun-24	BACS	Clerk	Office expenses	54.60	9.12	63.72
				1,679.62	60.12	1,739.74
Account Transfers - June, 2024						
		From	To			
17/06/24	Transfer	General Reserve Account	Business Current			1,500.00
						1,500.00

2. To maintain the general business account in credit a transfer of **£1,500** will be required from reserves.
3. The current account bank reconciliation on 17 June, 2024, after taking into account outstanding payments and transfers, is **£1,061.21**

Yarnfield and Cold Meece
Parish Council



WE HAVE A NEW
CONTACT NUMBER



Tel: 07786 948104

Website — www.ycm-pc.org.uk



@ycmparishcouncil