

# Parish Council of Coleford

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Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB  
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In line with government guidance and recommended social distancing and self-isolation rules for those who are vulnerable, it was agreed that this meeting would be conducted as a virtual meeting using Zoom video technology.

## Minutes of the Parish Council Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### PRESENT

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Allen, Banks, Barrett, Conn, Drescher, Evans, Pearce, Townsend and Turner. No members of the public attended.

### 1. PUBLIC FORUM

- 1.1 A member of the public raised concern over the fact that there were free range chickens next to the path by Douglas Yates Court. Due to an outbreak of Avian Flu these birds should be undercover. It was agreed that the Clerk would send a letter highlighting the requirements.

**Action: Clerk to write to the owner highlighting Government requirements for Avian Flu**

- 1.2 Our regular litter pick volunteers have expressed concerns over the increase in the paraphernalia used in solvent abuse around the pump track, the entrance to Preachers Vale and the bench opposite the old Post Office. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported it to the PCSO and asked for them to increase their patrols.

*Cllr Allen arrived 19.15hrs*

- 1.3 A member of the public said that they had seen a concrete table tennis table in a park at Barrow Gurney and they thought it would be a great addition to Highbury Playing Field. This would be considered for future investment.
- 1.4 Cllr Allen reported that the street light outside 98 Mendip Vale is not working.

**Action: Clerk to report to Somerset County Council.**

- 1.5 Cllr Turner asked if there was an update on the car sales at the Legion Car Park. Cllr Ham said that he had spoken with the management committee but did not have an update.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Hanney and Harding had sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.  
Cllrs Talbot did not attend.

### 3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION GRANTED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

There were none.

### 4. APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> & 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021

The minutes had been circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting. It was proposed that both sets accurately reflected the meeting and should therefore be signed by the Chair.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to ensure the minutes are signed and uploaded to the website**

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

All matter arising had been completed or would be discussed later in the meeting apart from:

- The Clerk confirmed that she had telephoned the Land Registry to establish why no response had been received on the recent application to establish land ownership of the land at Beacon View despite the cheque for the application fee being cashed. They promised to reply within 3 weeks.
- Clerk and Cllr Ham to complete the application for loss of income fund. – Still outstanding
- The Clerk has put a request on Facebook to find a volunteer or contractor to repair the door handle on the phone box. Clerk to establish if the electricity supply can be utilized. Still outstanding.

**Action Clerk to ensure that matters arising are completed**

## 6. Reports

### 6.1 PCSO

A newsletter for the Frome Rural Beat North had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Poaching, speeding, theft / non dwelling burglary and fly tipping were noted as the current priorities.

The Beat Team contact details are as follows:

Beat manager – PC 2673 David Cohen, David.Cohen@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

PCSO 9011 Russell Ford, Mobile – 07547658018, Russell.ford@avonandsomerset.police.uk

PCSO 8118 Dan Beck, Daniel.Beck@avonandsomerset.police.uk

**Action: Clerk to ask if the PCSO is able to attend a virtual meeting and provide an update on Coleford**

### 6.2 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Ham said that there was little to report this month but there is likely to be much to report at the March meeting.

### 6.3 District Councillors

Cllr Townsend and Cllr Ham gave the following report:

**PLANNING** - The 6 week Consultation was launched on 9th Feb on the Amended Main Modifications to the Local Plan Part 2. These cover two issues only, the requirement to take mitigation measures on developments likely to release Phosphates onto the Levels, and the removal of one proposed site in Rode. The Coleford position is that only the site for 21 dwellings by the old recycling center is proposed. This further progress on LPP2 gives grounds for optimism that the Gladman application could be refused on planning policy grounds alone.

The January Planning Board gave approval for the controversial outline application for the Saxonvale site in Frome. This will include up to 300 dwellings, probably flats, retail, light industrial and live/ work units, with a green open space by the river with a new bridge.

Mendip have released a statement about the reduced planning services now in place. This results from the pressures of Covid 19 and the setting of new priorities – saving lives, delivering statutory services and economic recovery. The reduced Enforcement service is a particular concern.

**FINANCE** - Mendip's year end budget deficit was forecast at £2.4m at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, this came down to £1.4m at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and the end of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter is now forecast to be in balance with some careful management. Similarly the Finance Officer has produced a balanced budget next year which would result in a £5 or 3.16% rise for the Band D property. This will be confirmed at Full Council on 22nd Feb.

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY** - Mendip's target of being Carbon Neutral by 2030 was reported to Cabinet as being unachievable in the real world, with a 40 to 47% reduction being more possible. A massive consultant's report produced 2 years after the Climate Emergency was declared has concluded that we have generation opportunities with solar PV, and potential emission reductions from road transport, domestic heating and agriculture. The latter is highly controversial with the farming community.

MARKETS - It was good to see Mendip succumb to the massive pressure from Frome Town Council in particular to open the Frome and Wells markets on Saturdays. The press release talks about Monday markets, we have yet to track these down.

## 7. Planning Applications

- 7.1 2021/0083/VRC - Application to vary condition 2 (drawings) of planning permission 2017/0600/FUL to revise proposed footprint, relocate entrance, alter parking layout, add ATM to front wall and add brick to all elevations. Crossway Garage Anchor Road Coleford Frome Somerset

Councillors had been advised that they needed to study the latest application to vary, along with the other applications which had previously been submitted prior to the meeting. After discussion it was recommended by Cllr Drescher and seconded by Cllr Turner that the application should be recommended for approval with the following conditions:

- That the ATM be located inside of the store.
- That the position of the air conditioning unit remains unchanged.

**Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions (2 District Councillors)**

**Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer**

- 7.2 2020/2201/OTS - Outline planning application for the erection of up to 63 dwellings with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS), a vehicular access point from Anchor Road. All matters reserved except for means of access (resubmission of 2019/2345/OTS) - Additional landscaping information received 18th January 2021.

Land Off Anchor Road Lipyeate Cross To Luckington Cross, Coleford, Frome, Somerset

Cllr Townsend reported that despite the appeal against the decision on the original application being lodged some 8 weeks ago, there is still no news from the inspector with respect to the grounds for appeal or the timescale. Although it has been confirmed that the case would be considered in a hearing, rather than by written representations.

Mark Reynolds of Context Planning was optimistic that the further developments on the emerging local plan part 2 would help our case for refusal of the application, on policy grounds, there are only 2 proposed changes and they don't affect Coleford. The site proposed near to the old recycling center in Coleford continues to be the only site mentioned in Coleford. If this latest application was to be referred to the Planning Board then the emerging plan could add significant weight to our case, and the plan should be approved by that time.

After discussion Cllr Townsend proposed that a cover letter be sent as follows:

Coleford Parish Council's (CPC) initial response to Recommend Refusal was submitted on 11-12-2020 and the Council is now reinforcing the position, that this application, which the applicant states is unchanged from the preceding 2019/2345, should not have been registered as valid, when the documents relating to the key issue it was intending to address were not available. These were not then published until 18-1-2021, only 10 days before the original determination date. As a result CPC and all other objectors have been greatly inconvenienced by having to respond twice to this application, in addition to having already done so with the previous application.

The Brochure dated August 2020 submitted by CPC against 2019/2345 remains valid as the basis of the Parish Councils continued Unanimous Recommendation to Refuse. A copy of the brochure will be sent to the Planning Officer with an updated report from Mark Reynolds of Context Planning. An Attachment will also be included covering CPC's view on Visual Impact, Ecology, Highways, Sustainability and Community Engagement

CPC's objections may be summarised as:

1. The Council's Planning Board voted its refusal on the grounds that "the excessive number of dwellings proposed would have a significantly harmful visual impact on the character of the area and landscape". This application proposes nothing to reduce the harm.
2. Conflict with the existing development plan and the highly advanced MLPP2
3. The unsustainable location
4. Highways – significant risk to public safety

In summary we consider that the applicant has done nothing to negate the original reason for refusal. We consider too that significant harm would be caused to public safety on the surrounding substandard highway network, principally Charmborough Lane. But the key issue is the progress made on LPP2 which does not include the application site. Due to the advanced state of LPP2 this should now carry significant weight and be sufficient grounds on its own for refusal.

It was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Banks that the application should be recommended for refusal for the reasons as stated above. The Clerk to work with Cllr Townsend to ensure that all supporting documents are sent to the planning officer before the close of business on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions (2 District Councillor)**

**Action: Clerk to work with Cllr Townsend to ensure that the response is submitted to the Planning Office**

## **8. Planning updates**

- 8.1 2016/2436/FUL – The erection of 2 agricultural buildings and temporary (3 years) permission for the siting of agricultural workers accommodation. Resubmission of 2016/1488/FUL  
Spring Water Farm, Anchor Road, Coleford, BA3 5PG  
Clerk has written to MDC Enforcement highlighting that the temporary agricultural dwelling was only permitted for 3 years which has now expired and the land should be restored.
- 8.2 2020/1712/TPO – T2 English oak, prune the interfering limbs with the BT wires to prevent damage in high winds. Prune the low branches extending to the neighbouring property by 3-4 m  
The Vicarage, Church Street, Coleford, BA3 5NG  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions
- 8.3 2020/1860/TPO - TPO M1075 – T1 Sycamore pollarded to a 5m framework.  
T2 sycamore prune the end weight of the front most limb by no more than 4 m will be removed without cut diameters not exceeding 150mm.  
T3 Sycamore, Thin the sub stem growing towards the neighbours property to order to alleviate lean strain on the union. Approx. 20% of the leaf bearing material will be removed.  
G 1 Sycamore carry out a full formative thin by removing 20% of the leaf bearing material with cuts not exceeding 150mm, tend to lightly reduce the lateral spread of the trees where the branch union with included bark are present.  
Pennant House, Church Street, Coleford, BA3 5NG  
Mendip District Council Split decision
- 8.4 2020/2528/TPO – G1 and T1 Ash, Fell to ground level due to ash die back./ TPO M1075  
The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Coleford, BA3 5NG  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions
- 8.5 Mendip Local Plan Part II – Sites and Policies; Consultation on Additional Main Modifications.  
MDC has published a schedule of additional main modifications which form part of ongoing examination of the Mendip Local Plan Part II. These cover two issues only, the requirement to take mitigation measures on developments likely to release Phosphates onto the Levels, and the removal of one proposed site in Rode. The Coleford position is that only the site for 21 dwellings by the old recycling center is proposed. These follow the second round of examination hearings held in November/December 2020. The consultation will run from 09/02/21 to 22/03/21. Responses should be submitted on the correct form.
- 8.6 Request for TPO on the Elm at Lipyeate. The Clerk reported that she had sent a further email to Bo Walsh asking him to reconsider granting a TPO on the Elm at Lipyeate along with a letter received from the Woodland Trust supporting the request.

**Action: Clerk to ensure response from Bo Walsh regarding request for TPO on the Elm at Lipyeate.**

- 8.7 2021/0217/AGB – Application for prior notification of agricultural development for a proposed building  
Windy Ridge, Tinkers Lane, Newbury, Frome

Ward Councillor had been asked by MDC Planning department to comment on the application. Cllr Townsend said that he had no objection and Cllr Ham said that he would have to declare a personal interest. No action required.

## 9. Update on Highways

Cllr Townsend and Ham called a Zoom meeting with Sara Davis of Somerset Highways to progress issues in Coleford, Holcombe, Leigh on Mendip and Stoke St Michael. The following topics were discussed:

- Charmborough Lane was top of our agenda but as usual no easy fixes were identified. A suggestion for a One Way system was aired again but this was not popular with Holcombe PC.
- The Gladman Brochure has been sent to Highways to prove to them that the issues on the Lane are much wider than their personal injury database.
- They also raised HGV usage of Dark Lane, Double Yellows by the Co-op, the pavement by the old Surgery, and also the need for better Give Way signage at the top of Doors Hill.
- The issue of HGVs on Whitehole Hill was also discussed, particularly the hazards for leisure users. Horse warning signs require evidence of significant usage. SLOW and Road Narrows signs at the bridge are a possible option. In line with discussions with neighbouring parish councils last year, the option of closing the Hill to HGVs would only result in more traffic through Coleford, Holcombe, Leigh and Stoke.
- Concern was also expressed at the Clean Air restrictions imminent in Bath and Bristol, which is likely to increase pollution in our area as HGVs in particular look for alternative routes to the M4 for example.

Coleford issues reported to Highways – 2 potholes on Cherry Gardens Lane and a defective light at the old Post Office crossing.

Coleford works - The surface has been made good on Anchor Rd just beyond the 30 sign, a great improvement. The pavement repair opposite Anchor Close, has been completed.

The Clerk confirmed that an email had been received from Somerset Highways regarding the pavement at the entrance to Springwater Farm and the Parish Councils request that the landowner funds the repair rather than the public funds. The response received explained that the County Council as the Highway Authority have a statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highway, hence the reason why repairs have been undertaken in the past. They said that they had given consideration to potentially reinforcing the footway, and when the scheme for pedestrian improvement works on Anchor road are completed it will be included as part of the pedestrian improvement scheme.

The Clerk confirmed that Niall Robertson had asked the Parish Council to provide the exact wording for the new street signs at Preachers Vale which Cllr Barret, Banks and Evans are to agree.

### Report of any new issues reported by Councillors

- 1 Cllr Ham reported that Dark Lane has deteriorated considerably large potholes near Luckington Cross.
- 2 Pot hole on Lawrence road
- 3 The gullies near to Rose and Crown Cottages and on High St / Springers Hill need to be cleared.

### Action: Cllr Townsend to report to SCC Highways

- 4 The drain near to the yellow gate on the footpath from Church Street to Beacon View is blocked causing flooding which is very difficult to negotiate during heavy rain.

### Action: Cllr Drescher to ask Steve Burdett to investigate

## 10. Finance

### Accounts approved for payments

The following invoices were produced for payment:

Vickie Watts Clerk Expenses - £52.82

Vickie Watts paid Wix.Com web hosting £111.75 & domain £12.46 - £124.21

Vickie Watts paid Crosscut shredding £35.99

Total to pay Vickie Watts **£213.02**

HMRC National Insurance - **£32.66**

PCC Coleford - 50% of Water & Garden waste charges at the Cemetery (2019 & 2020) - **£109.42**

SLCC – Clerk Virtual Regional Training Seminar South West - **£54.00**

To be split between Cranmore PC & Holcombe PC

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Banks that the payments should be made.

**Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to ensure cheques are signed and sent out**

**Consider having a Parish Council Credit Card – Agenda item for next meeting**

#### **11. Consider quotes for Grass cutting**

The Clerk had received 4 sealed quotes which were opened during the meeting. It was agreed that the information from each quote would be put into a spreadsheet for further consideration at the next meeting.

It was noted that some of the areas may require a cut in mid-March to ensure that they are in good order for the start of the contract period. This is due to the final cuts of 2020 not taking place.

**Action: Select Contractor for contract to be an Agenda item for February planning meeting**

**Discuss and agree what areas need to be cut before the contract starts**

#### **12. Consider hosting village litter pick Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021 @ 10am**

The Clerk confirmed that the Keep Britain Tidy website are not advising Litter picks be planned at present due to the current restrictions. It was agreed that this could be reconsidered at the April meeting.

Cllr Townsend said that Charmborough Lane was exceptionally bad in light of it being cleared twice in previous lockdowns. It was agreed that the Clerk would prepare a notice encouraging all to keep Coleford Tidy for display around the village and on Facebook.

**Action: Agenda item for April**

**Clerk to prepare a notice encouraging all to Keep Coleford Tidy.**

#### **13. Update of Royal British Legion (Coleford) Asset of Community Value**

Cllr Ham reported that he has been working on the application. He read out a statement which he intended to send with the application and supporting letters, copies of the minutes and photos of events at the Legion. It read:

“The Parish Council wish to nominate the complex known as The Royal British Legion Coleford, Anchor Road, Coleford, Radstock. The reason for this is to safeguard this community asset for the village, and surrounding villages for its high public value for Social, Health and Wellbeing, Community space, and Venue for use by all the local population.

It needs protection as the viability of Clubs and Pubs has become more difficult, with owners looking at ways of releasing capital and concentrating on their core business. The RBL (London) have been doing this Nationally (Stratton on the Fosse a good example) Difficult trading conditions over recent years and Covid 19 pandemic in the last year has meant the management committee (The lease holders) under the terms of the lease are finding trading almost impossible.

Coleford has no other large community space (i.e. No village hall) for a population of around 2,750. The social value of this asset can be judged by the number of user groups associated with the building. Large numbers of the Community are concerned and wish that the Parish Council do its utmost to preserve the facility for use by the community. To find ways of raising funds, investors or even loans to acquire the property, and providing a new lease for a management organization

The Club has tried to operate when Covid rules have allowed, but trading has been slow and restricted and the situation very worrying. The large Car Park is important as it is in the heart of the village and also supports the Shop, Pharmacy, Gospel Hall, Holy Trinity Church and of course the large functions held at RBL complex.

There are to date 32 letters, many Facebook comments, around 280 signatures on the petition all supporting the application. (all done electronically due to social distancing)”

It was proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Townsend that the Asset of Community Value application to MDC for the Royal British Legion (Coleford) as presented by Cllr Ham in the above statement be submitted to Mendip District Council for consideration.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: The Clerk to support Cllr Ham to ensure that the application is prepared for submission to MDC**

*Cllr Drescher left the meeting*

#### **14. Review quotes for re fencing the Hard Courts and astro turf type surface**

Cllr Allen confirmed that he was waiting for quotes on both multi-sport surface and a surface more targeted for football and rugby. This will be an agenda item for the March meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for March**

#### **15. Discuss quotes for rain water harvesting at Goodeaves allotments**

Cllr Ham had encouraged all Councillors to research rainwater harvesting online prior to the meeting. Concern was raised as to whether structures could be built to capture and store enough water without having to be too high off the ground which would then make them susceptible to the wind and potential damage. It was suggested that maybe the Council could provide some larger storage 1000ltr containers to store maximum rainfall from the existing structures. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the allotment holders to ask if this was something that could be helpful and where the containers might be sited.

Cllr Townsend would make enquiries as to how Leigh on Mendip Parish Council manage the water supply at their new allotments.

**Action: Clerk to contact the Goodeaves allotment holders  
Cllr Townsend to speak with Leigh on Mendip Parish Council  
Agenda item for March meeting**

#### **16. Consider quotes for fencing at Beacon View**

The Clerk had received 2 quotes as follows:

P R Simpson Contracting £1073.76 + VAT materials and labour

Ben Windel £225 + VAT for labour only

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Allen that the quote for Ben Windel would be accepted with Cllr Ham purchasing all of the materials. It was agreed that the rails would be screwed together rather than nailed to ensure easy access for future work on the ditch if required.

**Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to contact contractors with the decision.**

#### **17. Consider ground cover planting alongside the ditch at Beacon View**

Cllr Conn suggested that low growing plants be planted into the soil to provide ground cover, look effective but would be low maintenance. Cllr Evans raised concern over the stinging nettles and whether they would compete and kill off the plants. This would need to be addressed.

**Action: Cllr Conn and the Clerk to consider a scheme and issues and to seek quotes.**

**18. Correspondence**

CPRE newsletter – Passed to Cllr Townsend for perusal

SALC email – Right to Regenerate Consultation. Councillors to consider the email and notify the Clerk if a response is required.

Charity Commission – An email has been received acknowledging that the proposals for Highbury Playing Field would be acceptable with the Charity Commission.

**19. Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion**

The Clerk confirmed that the laptop had been reviewed by Geeking It Simple and although the screen was now working again the laptop battery is dead and it is still running on Windows 7 which Microsoft will not be supporting from later this year and will need to be upgraded. A quote had been provided for a similar spec laptop and software. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek other comparable quotes for consideration at the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk to seek quotes for laptop  
Agenda item for February planning meeting**

**20. Date of Next Meetings:**

Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Planning Meeting
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Parish Council meeting