

Parish Council of Coleford

Miss V Watts
Clerk to the Council
Tel: 07971 516916 / 01749 880428
Email: clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com

Gallant Hill Farm
Foxcote
Radstock
BA3 5YB

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 10th June 2020

Present

Councillor Philip Ham (Chairman presiding)
Cllr Allen, Banks, Barrett, Conn, Drescher, Evans, Pearce Townsend and Turner, 0 members of the public

There were no member of the public present and the Clerk Vickie Watts taking the minutes

Public Forum

There were no points raised.

1 Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

Cllr Hanney sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

2 Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none

3 Approve Minutes of last Parish Council meetings held on the 13th & 27th May 2020

The Clerk had circulated the minutes from the abovementioned meetings to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Banks that both sets of minutes accurately reflected the meetings. The Chair will sign the minutes at the earliest opportunity.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

The Clerk to upload the minutes to the website.

VW

4 Matters arising

All actions had been completed or would be discussed under the agenda item later in the meeting apart from:

- It is believed that the fly Tipping at Careys Mead is still outstanding
- Orchard Close allotments will be carried forward
- The Clerk has made enquiries for information to produce small information cards to explain about the Coleford defibrillators and what to do in the event of an emergency. These would be printed and distributed to parishioners. This could include the QR Code which can be scanned with a smart phone which will then take you to information on how to use the defibrillator. It was agreed that the Clerk will ask Clive Setter of AED Locator Ltd if he is able to help supply the cards and seek quotes.
- Cllr Allen to arrange for the work to be done on securing the gate at Beacon View.

VW

Ag

VW

MA

- Cllr Ham explained that MDC are aware that Coleford Parish Council are interested in taking ownership of the green at Preachers Vale / Careys Mead but they are yet to respond due to the coronavirus becoming priority. PH
- Cllr Ham to speak with Charlie Higgins of Somerset Highways regarding placing cones outside the Co-op to prevent parking to allow safe social distancing to take place. PH

It was agreed that the Clerk would write a letter of thanks to Mr John Hansford of Coleford Athletic Football Club to thank them for the donation of the goal posts and the nets recently installed by Cllr Drescher at the Coleford Playing Field. Mr Hansford and his family have since repainted the posts for which the Parish Council are extremely grateful. VW

5 Reports

- 5.1 PCSO report - PCSO Russell Ford had emailed the latest report which did not include any information relating to Coleford. It was agreed that the Clerk would email Russell to ask if they could be made more relevant to the village. VW

Cllr Evans joined the meeting at 19.20hrs

5.2 Somerset County Councillor report

County Cllr Philip Ham reported that One Somerset: This is out for consultation, it is about scrapping all district councils and Somerset County Council and forming one new council, giving back more control to Town and Parish Councils. This was on hold as agreed by all councils due to Covid 19 but South Somerset broke rank so Somerset County Council have had no option but to continue with consultation. If you have any questions about the consultation please contact Cllr Ham.

Covid 19 is still the main business to occupy most officers at County Hall, the R rate has risen to 1 in the last week with several cluster outbreaks. However overall Somerset County Council have been praised for all the hard work and keeping the rate of infection low especially in the elderly community.

Active travel especially around cycle ways and footpaths has been highlighted by grants from Central Government to capture some of the habits that Covid 19 has changed. As always the flow of money is not straight forward , 120k now for quick wins in 1st round, 480k in second round for town centers (100k) for Frome. Then another 500k to be bid for next January - District and County Councils are already working hard to get schemes ready for any monies that becomes available.

Finance at Somerset County Council showed 99% of savings last year achieved with around 7.6 million underspend, this is seen as exceptional under the circumstances of 2 years ago. However the Corona virus is costing more than the compensation money being received from Central Government, and obviously not knowing what the recovery will be is worrying to everyone.

County Cllr Philip Ham reported that it had been confirmed that the recent spike in Covid 19 cases in the last week was actually due to a faulty machine. 72 people tested positive but when re-tested proved to be negative.

5.3 Mendip District Councillors report

District Cllr Ham reported that the last month has been busy, with Covid 19 still being the biggest issue. The council offices are still closed with most employees working from home. All meetings are now virtual, large or small.

CABINET: This included items on footpaths and cycle ways to reduce car usage with some funding from Central Government. A paper referring to the new Clear Air Act and its implications to our District, and also an updating paper on progress and this years intended workload regards equality. There were also actions agreed with the Cabinet from the work done by the Scrutiny deprivation group. Cllr Ham explained that he had a personal interest in all as he had worked on all of them.

SCRUTINY: There were verbal updates on how Mendip District Council had dealt with the pandemic from Chief Executive Stuart Brown and financial 151 officer Paul Deal, who spoke of the implications to 20/21 and 21/22 years financially.

PLANNING: The May meeting was abandoned due IT failures to notify all parties involved and has been rescheduled for 10/6/2020 with the June meeting on 17/6/2020. The planning application for the Eagle Inn will be discussed on the 17th June although it was recently formally recognized as an asset of community value by Mendip District Council.

GRASS CUTTING: This had been stood down due to Covid 19, but after several phone calls it has been promised that it would be cut week commencing 18/05/2020 but then it was announced that rewinding of the grass would be done in Mendip in line with reducing carbon footprint. Cllr Ham said that he had demanded a map showing where this was to happen, which eventually resulted in him being told that it did not include Coleford and cutting would start again very soon, this was 3/6/2020 but still no cuts have been made.

GREEN WASTE BINS: It has been confirmed that residents who paid for their bins on time will get a refund next year due to them not being emptied during April and May. It seems that bin collections seem a bit erratic at the moment due to day changes and staff shortages. If you have any issues and this continues then please inform Cllr Ham who will try to get it sorted.

PARKING: Somerset County Council have now got traffic wardens back working on the streets but Mendip District Council have decided not to charge for parking in the Car Parks until August when the decision will be reviewed. It has to be asked where the lost revenue will be made up from.

FOODBANK and DAGGARRO hot foods. A big thanks must go to Amanda and Dagmar for these services, they have worked for weeks to help those in need in Coleford. Cllr Ham said that he knows that there are many others that have helped and made a big difference to so many, it is a credit to everyone.

CAMPING: We had unofficial camping in the bottom playing field a couple of weeks ago, Complaints were received for bad behavior. The Police were involved but did very little. The situation got worse and at this time it was understood that the campers were homeless with young children involved and lockdown. Child social services and the police were called again. To make it even worse they were driving a SORN car. Fortunately all ended peacefully.

5.4 Mendip Country Practice report

The surgery is continuing to see patients as it has throughout the pandemic so far. At lunch time (between 1.00 – 2.00pm) the phone lines remain open for urgent calls only. For non-urgent matters patients are asked to call back at 2.00pm.

Parishioners are reminded to inform their GP when they change their telephone numbers particularly mobile, email addresses or just move house as this will aide us greatly in making sure information gets to them in a timely fashion.

6 Planning Applications

There were none

7 Planning Updates

There were none.

8 Accounts approved for payments

The following payments had been submitted for payment:

V Watts - Clerk expenses	£61.59
HMRC – National Insurance	£20.08
Apollo Technology – Repair to audio on laptop	£54.00
Brenton’s Landscaping – Grass cutting Inv 319, 325 & 343	£525.00
SALC & NALC – Annual affiliation fees	£627.59

The Clerk confirmed that the monthly direct debit from EDF Energy had been reduced from £14p/m to £11p/m. This would be due to the changing rooms being used much less during lock down, so is likely to rise again.

It was proposed by Cllr Barrett and seconded by Cllr Banks that the payments should be made. Cheques will be signed by Cllr Ham, Cllr Conn, Cllr Townsend and the Clerk

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

- 9 Agree Councillors to complete Tree survey**
Cllr Barrett agreed to complete the survey for this year and would liaise with Cllr Harding to establish if he is happy to assist. MB
- 10 Review Grave Digging Policy**
Cllr Pearce explained that he had considered the points raised by the ICCM representative in response to the grave diggers risk assessments and method statement. After some research, a thorough grave digging policy was found online which will be adapted to suit the Coleford cemetery. This will be circulated to all Councillors and presented for approval at the Planning meeting. CP/VW
Ag
- 11 Review increase to Cemetery fees**
The Clerk had circulated a discussion document showing potential increases prior to the meeting. It was agreed that an increase of 5% would be implemented as of the 1st of July. The figures would be rounded up or down to the nearest pound. The fees had remained the same since 2017. VW
- 12 Review increase to Allotment fees**
The Clerk had circulated a discussion document showing potential increases prior to the meeting. It was agreed that an increase of 5% would be implemented as of the September 2021 - Figures would be rounded up or down to the nearest pound. The allotment holders will be notified of the price increase with this year’s invoices which are sent at the end of the Summer giving them 12 months’ notice of the increase. The fees had remained the same since 2017. VW
- The Clerk reported that the Council currently had 7 people on the allotment waiting list and wondered if there was any scope to redevelop an area of Parish Council owned land at Beacon View, which had previously been allocated as allotments. Or should the PC look to purchase another new area for allotments? Agenda item for the July meeting. VW
Ag
- The Clerk had received a request from a Goodeaves allotment holder asking if a small, rough area in the corner near the playground could be cleared to create a place for a picnic table for allotment holders to meet and enjoy refreshments. The Clerk will seek the views of all the allotment holders to establish if this would be welcome or possible. Agenda item for the July meeting. VW
Ag
- 13 Update on the Coronavirus and the support in Coleford**
Cllr Ham reported that support continues with the Coleford Angels helping residents with shopping, dog walking and collecting prescriptions. The foodbank is being well run and well used. Dagaroo continues to prepare and deliver excellent meals to Coleford residents.

Cllr Conn said that he had heard that PCSO's are making regular visits to vulnerable residents within the village which had been much appreciated. Cllr Turner said that other groups were also making fortnightly phone calls to check in with vulnerable residents, which again is reassuring.

Cllr Townsend arrived at 19.45hrs

14 Highways

There was little to report. A request had been made to Somerset Highways to clear the hardened mud on the lane at Cherry Gardens.

Cllr Turner requested that an urgent request be made to the Highways team to repair the pavement at the entrance to Springwater Farm. Despite being repaired a little over a month ago it has already deteriorated to the point of being dangerous to pedestrians. Cllr Townsend to inspect and report.

AT

The Clerk to follow up on the letter written to Somerset Highways to thank them for the previous repair but asking that the landowner should pay rather than the public.

VW

Cllr Conn thanked Somerset Highways for the installation of the new sign at The Green showing that there is no through road.

Cllr Ham confirmed that the 'Cows Crossing' sign has now been installed outside Roger Philips Hillside Farm on Newbury Road, which was appreciated.

Cllr Ham asked if the requested weight limit could be progressed for Dark Lane as there is now an increased amount of HGV's using the lane on a daily basis. Cllr Townsend to follow up.

AT

Signs have been erected warning of the junction where Charmborough Lane meets Charlton Road however the sign on the Holcombe side is in the hedgerow and is already obscured and the road markings have not yet been done. Cllr Townsend will discuss this with Sara Davies of Somerset Highways as well as establish when the other safety measures will be implemented at this site.

15 Update on the Gladman's Planning application

16 Matters of urgency

There were none.

17 Date of Next Meetings:

Wed 24 th June 2020	Planning Meeting
Wed 8 th July 2020	Parish Council meeting