

Parish Council of Coleford

Miss V Watts

Clerk to the Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday 11th August 2021

Present

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

The Clerk Vickie Watts took the minutes

1. Public Forum

1.1 Cllr Allen said that residents had expressed concern over the number of recycling collections which have been missed over recent months. Cllr Ham said that Somerset Waste partnership were trying to ensure that the missed collections were not affecting the same areas each time and they were offering financial incentives to entice HGV drivers to join them.

1.2 Cllr Ham reported that there is an excessive amount of mud in the middle of Dark Lane, which is going to cause an accident or damage to a vehicle.

Action: Cllr Townsend to report to Somerset Highways

1.3 Cllr Townsend reported that the footpaths between Highbury Street and Careys Mead and Careys Mead to Church Street are overgrown.

Action: Clerk to write to the landowners

1.4 Cllr Evans asked if the Council could install the grit bin at Beacon View which was discussed some time ago.

Action: Agenda item for next meeting

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Barrett, Harding, Turner and Drescher had sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Resignation / Co-option of Councillors

The Chairman explained that a letter of resignation had been received from the Vice Chairman, Cllr Conn, which everyone agreed was a sad loss to the Parish Council. Andy was an extremely pro-active member of the team who will be very much missed.

Action: Clerk to advertise the vacancy and notify MDC of the resignation.

5. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Bank proposed Cllr Pearce as Vice Chairman which was seconded by Cllr Townsend. Cllr Pearce accepted the role

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions

6. Approve Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on the 14th July 2021

The minutes from the meeting had been circulated to all Councillors for consideration. It was agreed that they accurately reflected the meeting and the minutes were approved.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to upload to the website.

7. Matters arising

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

Sarah Halford has been seeking quotes for the 3G surface and renovation of the MUGA. It was agreed that the working party should meet as soon as possible to discuss the quotes and the MDC funding application.

Action: Arrange date for working party to meet.

8. Reports

1. PCSO

The newsletter for the Frome Rural North had been circulated to all Councillors which provided an overview of the current issues and policing priorities. There were no specific references to Coleford. It was noted that the PCSO had been visible within the village.

2. County Councillor

Coronavirus infection rates: As at 30th July the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 26,526 (up from 20,982 on 25th June) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 802. The rate per 100,000 stands at 206.9 (47.1) for Somerset with Mendip at 234.5 (40.7), Sedgemoor at 195.7 (74.7), South Somerset 214.4 (20.8) and SW&T at 187.0 (58.7). The number of total deaths across the County is currently 40% below the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 1.3 and 1.5.

Despite significant progress and even for those who have had both jabs it is vitally important to remember, to observe Hands-Face-Space and to Ventilate indoor areas at all times.

Road map out of lockdown: It is expected that the final lifting of restrictions including the need to self-isolate will be removed from 16th August 2021.

Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline: A single phone number continues to be available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. **0300 790 6275**, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm.

Vaccination programme roll-out: Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 93.7% of the adult population having had one dose of vaccine and 77.4% having had both doses. Work continues to encourage further take up particularly amongst younger adults and a real focus on ensuring the second vaccine to this group.

Local Government Reorganisation: The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has delivered his decision on which unitary council business cases met his three tests and will therefore be progressed through Parliament. A single unitary met all of his clear tests including the ability to improve local government and services.

It is expected that the orders will be laid before Parliament in the late Autumn and a vesting date of the new authority as April 2023. Work with partners will now commence to progress through the transition period.

Tick warning: With the warmer weather come ticks, which thrive in woodland, long grass and even urban parks. SCC has put together a 'tick list' to follow to reduce the risk of being bitten including: Walking on clearly defined paths, wearing light coloured clothing, using an insect repellent, wearing long trousers and long-sleeved tops to reduce the skin exposure and carrying out a regular tick check after outdoor activities. Being bitten by a tick doesn't usually require hospital treatment but people are advised to dial NHS 111 if they start to feel unwell.

County-wide Bus Services: Following the Government's announcement in March of the new National Bus Strategy – 'Bus Back Better' a £3 billion pot of funding is being made available to improve bus services across the country and Somerset County Council can bid for a share of this in partnership with

operators. But first, the Council needs to know about residents' experience and where the gaps in services are. You can take the survey at <https://someset.inconsult.uk/someset.bus.survey/consultationHome>

Reflections of the pandemic: The Somerset Library Service is inviting people to share their experiences of the last sixteen months, to be recorded for future generations. As part of 'Reflections', a county-wide creative response to the pandemic, libraries will host a series of free drop-in sessions throughout August and online via social media. The collaborative artwork and film will be given to the South West Heritage Trust as a 'record' of the experiences of Somerset people during the pandemic. The film and artwork will then be showcased at the evening 'Reflections' event to be held on the 10 September. This initiative forms part of Somerset Libraries' response to initiative, funded by The BBC and Arts Council England.

Summer holidays school meals support: The Department of Work and Pensions has extended its Covid Local Support Grant, providing £1.4m to Somerset County Council who will use the grant to fund food vouchers worth £15 per week for children eligible for Free School Meals over the six-week Summer Holidays. SCC has been working to tackle holiday hunger during the pandemic, providing funding for food and vouchers over the October, February, and May half-term periods, as well as the Christmas and Easter holidays.

Forecast heat wave: Many forecasters are expecting temperatures to rise again in August and so Somerset's Public Health have issued the following important advice: **Look out for others**, especially older people, young children and babies and those with underlying health conditions. **Stay cool indoors:** open windows when the air feels cooler outside than inside; shade or cover windows exposed to direct sunlight; move to a cooler part of the house, especially for sleeping. **Keep drinks within easy reach** – water is better than sugary or caffeinated drinks for staying hydrated. Avoid excess alcohol. **Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle**, especially infants, young children or animals. Try to **keep out of the sun** between 11am to 3pm.

National Recognition: Somerset County Council has been shortlisted for three prestigious national awards in recognition of its work during the coronavirus pandemic. The categories include; 'Best Workforce Transformation' for its redeployment work during the pandemic, 'Community Heroes' for the work of Community Council for Somerset's Village and Community Agents, and 'Delivering Better Outcomes' for Somerset's Micro-providers, independent care providers who proved a lifeline for Somerset's isolated rural population throughout the pandemic.

3. District Councillors

UNITARY

The Secretary of State has published his decision that the Unitary Council will be the One Somerset model covering the whole county rather than the Stronger Somerset proposal for separate East and West Somerset unitaries. The next legal steps are:

- Parliamentary approval to be arranged Dec-Jan
- Elections for new Unitary Council May 2022
- Unitary Council Vesting Day 1st April 2023

We need to consider the roles our parishes wish to take in the new Local Community Networks. Coleford are currently included in the preparatory matrix of responsibilities being prepared by Frome Town Council. We may wish to consider being involved in a rural Mendip grouping to avoid the possible risk of being dominated by Frome.

PLANNING

Last month's Planning Board considered 3 large applications for 345 houses on the Keyford side of Frome. The decision was deferred to give the developers the chance to improve their offers. If approved they will contribute significantly towards rectifying Mendip's 5-year housing shortfall. Members received a formal briefing from the developers of the 'Selwood Garden Community' which could bring a further 1700 houses to the south west corner of Frome. The formal application is imminent.

An application by Gladman for 90 houses at Chilcompton has been refused by Mendip at officer level without even going to the Planning Board.

Gladman appeal – this goes ahead on 18th August on a virtual basis. Invitations to take part or listen in have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate. We met with Mendip's new planning Team Leader who will lead the case for the defence. He has very rapidly got up to speed with the fundamental issues and led the Chilcompton case to refuse. The Parish Council case will be presented formally by our planning

consultant Mark Reynolds, supported by ourselves. For the updated Local Plan Part 2 the Inspector's Final Report missed the re-scheduled date of the end of July, though formal adoption is still planned for the end of September. A draft document is expected in time for the Gladman appeal.

CABINET

Somerset Rivers Authority – The SRA was set up in 2015 to find better ways of tackling our flooding problems following the 2013/2014 disasters. We were presented with a paper which shows that funding is being directed not just at the Somerset Levels but also at the higher catchment areas and specific issues within Mendip.

Carbon Management Plan – A 90-page report was presented giving details of how Mendip is going to reduce its carbon footprint by 2030 and reduce our vulnerability to the threat of climate change. The paper was disappointing in that it states that we at our level can have an effect on climate change, which is clearly nonsense in a global context. What we can do is be seen to show a lead. Also, it gave no indication of what this will cost us in terms of deep house insulation, electric cars, ground/air source heating to name a few, and also the Council's own costs, payable by us. A Climate Action pledge card is available to help us focus our actions. Also, we may wish to consider procuring an EV charging station for the village

RECYCLING - SWP continue to have problems in Mendip, due largely to Covid and staff shortages.

9. Planning Applications

There were none.

10. Planning updates including enforcement issues

Appeal APP/Q3305/W/20/3265459 Application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved for the erection of up to 63 dwellings Appeal Location: Land Off Anchor Road, Lipyeate Cross to Luckington Cross, Coleford, Frome, Somerset, Appellant: Gladman Application Number: 2019/2345/OTS

The Appeal will take place on 18th August 2021 at 10am via Microsoft Teams. Registration is required in advance.

Appeal APP/Q3305/W/21/3270276 Erection of a single detached residential dwelling, garage and associated development (updated information received). Springwater Farm, Anchor Road, Coleford, Frome, Somerset, BA3 5GX

The Appeal date is yet to be agreed.

11. Discuss and complete the Unitary matrix provided by Frome Town Council

A matrix had been put together by Frome Town Council which listed the various services which Parish Councils may be interested in taking on or have more say in under the Unitary authority. The Clerk read out the list and councillors indicated which they felt was relevant to Coleford. It was agreed that the Clerk would then complete the matrix and return it to Frome Town Council.

Action: Clerk to complete and return the matrix

12. Consider quotes for hedge cutting contract

The Clerk opened 3 envelopes and read out the quotes received from LSJ Gardening services, Coombe Garden Services and Hill and Hill.

After discussion it was agreed that the quote from LSJ Gardening Services would be accepted namely, £110.00 for Front hedge and £155.00 for the Back hedge at Church Street garden, plus £550.00 for the Cemetery hedges.

Action: Clerk to contact all Contractors and notify them of the outcome.

13. Consider quote for cutting back the hedge at Coleford Playing Field

It was agreed this would be considered at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting.

14. Discuss and agree tree work on Coleford Allotment

An email had been received from the tenant of the allotment garden at The Post Office, Church Street asking for permission to fell a blue cedar tree and for some willows to be pollarded, as they are too top heavy and need reducing in height. After discussion it was agreed that permission should be given.

Action: Clerk to notify the tenant that permission is given for the tree work to be completed.

15. Highways including:

1. Councillor update

Cllr Townsend gave the following report:

Duke of Cumberland – a site meeting was held with County Highways on 16th July. The overflow car park and improved signage have improved matters and a way ahead was agreed which will involve some resurfacing work to allow the public highway of Barlake Lane to be clearly marked.

Stoke Bottom – Some limited markings for repairs have appeared. These are totally inadequate, Highways have been challenged and have agreed to re-inspect, and also to approach Pennys again about edge erosion

Anchor Rd 30 mph markings – The cross bar road markings at the entry to the village have become obliterated. Any speed reduction measures here are important. To be reported to Highways.

2. Report of any new issues to be reported

There were no new items reported.

3. Respond to the Bus Back Better feedback request

Cllr Ham confirmed that he had attended several meetings regarding funding available to improve the bus service within our parish. Comments had been obtained from Parishioners via social media and it was agreed that the Clerk would complete the feedback form and submit before the deadline in 15th August.

Action: Clerk to complete the feedback form and submit

16. Finance

1. Bank Reconciliation

It was agreed that Cllr Allen would check to bank reconciliation prior to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to drop the bank reconciliation to Cllr Allen

2. Review Cemetery Fees

The Clerk highlighted that the current cemetery fees did not include a charge for an additional inscription to a tablet. It was agreed that a charge of £20 should be added to the Cemetery fees.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to update the form and upload to the website

3. Discuss and review quote received from water supplier

The Clerk presented a quote from Everflow Water who were offering the water and sewerage at a cheaper rate than Water 2 Business. After discussion Councillors agreed that they were concerned about the quality of the service in comparison to the current supplier and therefore we should remain with Water2Business. No further action required.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

4. Agree standing order for LSJ Gardening Services

The Clerk confirmed that a standing order of £912.50 for a period of 6 months should be set up. This would amount to the agreed total for the year when taking into consideration the first 2 payments which will have been paid by cheques. All Councillors present agreed that the standing order should be set up with the first payment in September and last in February.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to instruct the bank.

5. Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

HMRC – Clerks National Insurance	£ 31.37
Clerk Expenses	£ 44.97
Society of Local Councils (Annual membership)	£ 92.50
SALC (Clerk training)	£ 25.00
LSJ Gardening services (2 x invoices)	£1825.00

Cllr Ham proposed that all payments should be made which was seconded by Cllr Townsend.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

17. Consider quotes for setting up Parish Council email addresses for Councillors with associated security

The Clerk had sought quotes from 2 local IT suppliers but was concerned as to whether the level of security was appropriate so it was agreed that further investigation would be completed prior to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to further investigate. Agenda item for the next meeting.

18. Review annual inspection reports for Coleford Play areas and consider quotes for repair

Cllr Conn and Harding had previously reviewed the annual inspection reports and identified that required repair by a contractor or weekly monitoring by the Clerk.

The Clerk presented the following quotes for repair:

Coleford Playing Field Rocking horse – There are signs of rust which will continue to deteriorate if not addressed. Jim Kelly has quoted £425.00 to make and fit aluminium cover plates to the foot boards at a cost of £425.00 plus VAT

Roman Way Slide – Erosion at the foot of the slide has exposed concrete. Alvian have quoted £220.00 plus VAT to supply tiger mulch to provide a wear pad.

Goodeaves Nest swing – the ropes are twisted which causes damage to the internal wire which then compromises the weight loading capacity.

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Allen that the quotes for the rocking horse and slide should be accepted and permission was given that if the ropes could be supplied by Alvian for less than £500 then that should also be accepted.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to establish quote for the rope and place orders as agreed

19. Consider Review and Adoption of policies

The Clerk had circulated the policies prior to the meeting for Councillors to consider. It was noted that there had been no instruction from Somerset Association of Local Councils that any required updating.

- Complaint's procedure
- Freedom of information publication scheme
- Safeguarding Policy

It was agreed that all three policies should be adopted as presented.

Vote 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to upload to the website

20. Discuss potential sites for Allotments

Cllrs Ham, Allen, Drescher and Barrett to visit the potential sites to consider the viability of each and report back to the Council. The Clerk to scan and send the map showing the location of the land proposed at Vobster.

It was noted that Holcombe Parish Council are also looking for sites and the Clerk was asked to raise whether they would consider making the allotments a joint venture on an appropriate site.

It was agreed that the Clerk would ask if the grant funding could be used for a different site.

Action: Clerk to email map with Vobster site. Councillors to make site visits. Clerk to write to Holcombe PC to ask if they would consider a joint venture. Clerk to ask if funding can be used for new site.

21. Consider and Approve Memorial application

There were none.

22. Consider extending Highbury Playing Field Charity to include Coleford Playing Field

The Clerk confirmed that she had emailed the Charity Commission and asked if it would be possible to add the Coleford Playing Field to the existing charity but is yet to receive a response.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

23. Decide how to mark the Queens Platinum Jubilee Central Weekend June 2022

It was agreed that the Clerk would invite village groups and members of the public to attend an open meeting on the 15th September to discuss how the village can celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee in June 2022.

Action: Clerk to write to invite village groups and advertise the meeting in On the Map and the village newsletter.

24. Meetings to attend or attended

15th August 2021 2.30 to 4.30pm – Take Art Promoters and performers Cream Tea. Forward invitation to Tony Mayell.

Action: Clerk to forward email to Tony

25. Correspondence

Email confirming installation of internet at the Hub to supply free Wi-Fi – no action required
MDC phosphate newsletter highlighting actions being taken to address the problems created by the phosphate enrichment issue – No action required
The Countryside Charity newsletter – Passed to Cllr Townsend

26. Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion

There were none

27. Date of Next Meetings:

25th August 2021 – Planning meeting
8th September 2021 – Monthly meeting

Meeting finished at 22.10hrs