

# Parish Council of Coleford

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Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB  
Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council  
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## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022

### Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Allen, Barrett, Banks, Bell, Evans, Paterson and Pearce

There were 2 members of the public present. The Clerk Vickie Watts taking the minutes

### 1. Public Forum

1. The owners of School House attended the meeting highlighting concerns over the news that the Hub committee are keen to reduce the height of the stone wall which borders the old school yard. They believe that if this was done it would alter the appearance of old Coleford and alter the auditory impact of the road noise, fumes and visual impact of the traffic passing for those living in the School House.

They would like the Parish Council to consider:

- Installing a 20mph limit from Douglas Yates Court to the other side of the pub
- Traffic calming speed bumps either side of the school yard entrance
- Signs to slow down for the concealed entrance
- Illuminating sign to show drivers if they have exceeded 20mph

The Chairman thanked them for coming and said that these points would be given consideration. He would also ask the Hub Committee to give an update on their proposals.

*Action: Chairman to arrange for Hub committee to liaise with home owner and discuss with Somerset County Council highways department.*

2. There seems to have been an increase in the number of dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs, in particularly on route to the school. It was suggested that signage could be an option along with a mention in On the Map.

*Action: Clerk to investigate signage options and put in monthly report.*

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Drescher and Townsend which were accepted by the Chair.

Cllr Turner did not attend.

### 3. Councillor resignation and co-option

The Clerk had received a letter of resignation from Cllr Harding who as a result of changes to employment felt unable to commit to the Council. The Chairman confirmed he had sent an email wishing him good luck and thanked him for the time he had given to be a Councillor.

The Clerk has advertised the vacancies and hopes to have a new member available to co-opt at the next meeting.

#### 4. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

#### 5. Approve Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

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

**Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to upload to the website.*

#### 6. Matters arising

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

- 6.1 The emergency plan has been circulated to all for consideration. Cllrs Paterson and Bell will make a start on creating a Coleford version. Agenda item for the February meeting.
- 6.2 Cllrs were asked to check the levels of grit and report to the Clerk whether the bins needed topping up.
- 6.3 Clerk to create email addresses for Councillors

*Action: Clerk to action outstanding matters arising*

#### 7. Reports

1. PCSO report  
No report had been received.
2. Somerset County Council report  
The Clerk had previously circulated the report from County Cllr Ham, as follows:

**Coronavirus infection rates:** As of 31<sup>st</sup> December the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 83,300 (22% up from 68,307 on 30<sup>th</sup> September) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 977. The rate per 100,000 stands at 766.6 (435.2) for Somerset with Mendip at 892.0 (564.1), Sedgemoor at 756.6 (418.1), South Somerset 684.3 (505.5) and SW&T at 770.4 (276.6). The number of total deaths across the County is currently level with the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 0.9 and 1.1

Infection rates in Somerset continue to be extremely high. With the new Omicron variant it is important, even for those who have had both jabs, to remember to follow Government guidance on wearing masks, to continue to observe Social Distancing and to always ventilate indoor areas.

**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 programmes roll-out:** Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 95.8% of the 18+ population having had one dose of vaccine and 93.2% having had both doses. IN total 50.9% of the adult population have also received their booster.

**Local Government Reorganisation:** Following the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset it is expected that statutory orders will shortly be laid before Parliament with an agreed vesting date of April 2023. The first elections to the new authority together with Somerset Town and Parish elections will be held on 5th May 2022.

**Pay boost for Somerset Carers:** Somerset County Council and the NHS have announced a £4.8m investment to increase pay and recognise the vital contribution of carers in Somerset. The Council are proposing a 9% uplift to domiciliary care providers who agree to pay all their staff a minimum of £10.50 per hour; a retention bonus of £250 for those who have been working in registered care for the last 6 months; and a £250 payment for new starters in domiciliary care. The funding for these changes has been jointly agreed and funded by Somerset County Council and the NHS, as social care is crucial in supporting people leaving hospital and in the community. There are currently a number of vacant social care roles and to find out more visit [www.proudtocaresomerset.org.uk/jobs](http://www.proudtocaresomerset.org.uk/jobs)

**Appeal for return of healthcare equipment:** Healthcare equipment is loaned on behalf of the NHS and social care teams when people leave hospital or after a period of illness, to help them stay safe at home and retain their independence. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has increased demand for this equipment and created shortages in supply. To book a free collection so that equipment can be reused to help others call Millbrook Healthcare on 0333 003 2407.

**Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans:** SCC has unveiled plans for major new safe cycling and walking routes in the county to help create greener, healthier and more active streets. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Yeovil and Taunton are the first to be published – they’ll be followed by plans for Bridgwater and Frome and funding has been netted to draw up plans for three other towns. Having a plan in place is key to unlocking Government funding to build the infrastructure and enable people in Somerset to choose to walk or cycle to work, school, the shops or for other short trips for the benefit of people’s health and the environment.

**Reporting faults on the Highway:** Utilising a new upgraded online system with an improved interactive map, members of the public can report a highways problem 24/7. From potholes, blocked drains and broken manhole covers, to mud on the road, overgrown vegetation, damaged pavements or cycle paths, faulty traffic lights or missing markings – they can all be reported in just minutes from a smartphone, tablet or computer. The full range is available via [www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/)

**Reaching Carbon Zero:** As part of Somerset County Council’s commitment to decarbonise its buildings Yeovil Library has undergone a transformation to make the building greener and more energy efficient. The project has seen a new air source heat pump installed to heat the building in a more sustainable way, lamps changed to LEDs, new thermally efficient windows, improved ventilation with carbon dioxide monitors, and significant additional insulation. The measures will save approximately 27 tonnes of carbon each year. The investment is part of a wider SCC scheme to decarbonise and make the Council’s buildings more environmentally friendly and will cover 12 projects including Taunton Library, Frome Library, Glastonbury Hub, and County Hall. Early estimates indicate that the delivery of the various schemes could reduce SCC’s carbon output by around 27% – around 400 tonnes of carbon per annum. All the remaining projects aside from County Hall are due to be complete by March 2022.

**Applications for school places 2022:** All children starting school for the first time in September 2022, as well as those moving between infant and junior or first and middle school applications must be submitted by Saturday 15 January 2022. [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions)

3 Mendip District Council report  
District Cllr Townsend reported as follows:

On 20<sup>th</sup> December Mendip’s Full Council voted to adopt the updated Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2). Which Cllr Ham and Townsend did not support as it fails in 3 of its 5 key objectives – the most significant being to produce a forward 5 year supply of housing sites. They were told that was because the Government changed the rules during the updating process.

This was true, the rules were changed to increase the requirement on Mendip to produce 600 houses a year from the original 420 as part of the Government's aim to rectify the national long term housing shortage. This change was announced 30 months ago but the LPP2 updating process did not change to embrace the new requirement and as a result LPP2 is out of date. The implications are immediate as Coleford discovered. Where the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a forward 5 year supply of housing sites the National Framework rules are invoked which requires objectors to prove that any proposed development would cause Significant and Demonstrable Harm sufficient to outweigh the benefits of producing new housing. This is a very low bar for a developer as Coleford discovered. The fact that the site on Anchor Road was not included in the new LPP2 had little weight. The implications for any other such sites within Mendip are obvious and cause for concern.

At Full Council the public and Members expressed concern that the site allocation process in Norton St Philip and Beckington in particular had been seriously flawed and open to legal challenge. Opposition Members formally proposed a Motion to defer adoption of LPP2 to allow the Council to seek further advice to satisfy Members that it was not legally vulnerable. The Motion was heavily defeated and Council then voted to adopt LPP2. Within days the Council received formal notification of the intention of the offended villages to proceed with a Judicial Review. We believe Mendip's defence is very thin and are recommending that they do not defend the action and put at risk many tens of thousands of pounds of our money.

We are urgently seeking from Mendip its proposals to put in hand a plan to rectify the 5 year housing land shortage. The bland response that "Officers will review in the coming months how the requirements and timescales for plan review can be progressed as a joint workstream in transition to the new Somerset authority" is not acceptable and will provide no protection to our villages from speculative development. Appeals submitted against Mendip's refusals at Leigh on Mendip, Stoke St Michael, Chilcompton and White Post will show how vulnerable we are.

The Unitary authority have set up Scrutiny panel of which Cllr Ham is a representative

#### 4 Unitary Update

Cllr Ham confirmed that there was nothing to report as things have been quiet due to the festive break.

### 8. **Planning Application**

All Councillors had considered the plans for each of the applications prior to the meeting.

#### 1. [2021/2795/HSE](#) - Single storey extension, 85 Mendip Vale, Coleford, Radstock, BA3 5PP

It was proposed by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Barrett that the decision be left to the Planning Officer.

**Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions (1 Ward Councillor)**

#### 2. [2021/2651/HSE](#) - Erection of a 2 storey rear extension. The Cottage, Highbury Street, Coleford, Radstock BA3 5NS

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the application should be approved.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions (Ward Councillor)**

#### 3. [2021/2676/OTS](#) - Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of a single dwelling (Resubmission of 2017/0194/OTS). 1 Roseberry Cottages, Highbury Street, Coleford, Radstock, BA3 5NX

It was proposed by Cllr Banks and seconded by Cllr Evans that the application should be approved.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions (Ward Councillor)**

***Action: Clerk to notify the planning officers of the decisions***

## 9. Planning updates including enforcement issues

1. APP/Q3305/W/21/3270276 – Springwater Farm, Anchor Road, Coleford, BA3 5GX  
Appeal against Mendip District Council against their decisions to refuse 2020/1033/FUL (Erection of a single detached residential dwelling, garage and associated development).  
The appeal was dismissed.

It was agreed that the permission for the temporary dwelling on the site expired some time ago and therefore the Council would write to Mendip District Council Enforcement office to request that the temporary dwelling should be removed.

**Action: Clerk to draft a letter to Planning Enforcement**

2. Springwater Farm, Anchor Road, Coleford, BA3 5GX  
Cost application in relation to the Appeal APP/Q3305/W/21/3270276  
Application for an award of costs was refused.
3. Storm overflows – Gladman application  
Cllrs Ham and Townsend have written to Wessex Water and Mendip District Council highlighting the unease over the large number unauthorized discharges from the existing sewage system and the concern over how the system will cope with the addition of 63 new dwellings. Wessex Water have responded and concluded by saying that the Gladman development has been added to their network modelling program and the impact on the network, points of connection and any required mitigation works will be assessed. They will ensure that the Parish Council is involved so that they can pass on local knowledge.

## 10. Highways including:

1. Councillor updates – Cllr Townsend had circulated the following highway report which was in 2 parts, General Items throughout the Parish which will be made much worse by the traffic generated by the additional 63 houses, and Specific Items to be resolved with County Highways relating to the Anchor Road site:

### PART 1 GENERAL ISSUES

- Co-op Junction
- Pavement between Anchor Close and Farley Dell
- Underhill Parking
- Soho Junction
- Weight Limits – Dark Lane, Charity Lane, Cherry Gardens Lane
- 20 mph zone
- Refresh/repaint all road markings
- Charmborough Lane Safety – Road Narrows signs, White Lining, SLOW markings, HGVs rerouted through Vobster

### PART 2 SPECIFIC GLADMAN SITE ISSUES, Anchor Rd

- Precise Location of vehicle and pedestrian access to site
- Visibility Splays
- 30 mph limit relocation and sightlines
- Speed hump by site entrance
- Village Gate
- Relocation of bus stop and pavement arrangements
- Widening of road to 6m

**Action: Cllr Townsend and Ham will take up these issues with Somerset Highways.**

2. Report of any new issues to be reported  
There were none.

## 11. Finance

### 1. Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Bell had checked the bank reconciliation for December and found it to be in order.

**Action: Clerk to drop Bank Reconciliation to Cllr Bell**

### 2. 3rd Quarter Budget review

The Clerk circulated a spreadsheet which gave the Councils financial situation as at the 31<sup>st</sup> of December which included a forecast to the end of the financial year. After discussion it was agreed that it gave a realistic view which should be approved.

**Vote 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

### 3. Agree Budget and Precept for 2022/23

The Clerk had circulated the latest version of the proposed budget for 2022/23 along with the Mendip District Council tax base which shows the implication of the precept on the parishioners and their Council tax bill. After discussion it was agreed that the precept should be increased by 6% to a total of £47,213. (Last year it was £44,541). This will mean that a Band D homeowner will pay £1.20 per week (£62.35 per year) or 8p more each week than last year for the Parish Council element of the Council tax bill.

**Vote 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

### 4. Invoices approved for payment:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

HMRC	£ 31.37
Somerset County Council Pension Fund	£210.00
Water 2 Business	£151.03
Somerset Association of Local Councils	£ 25.00
V Watts - Clerks Expenses	£ 35.00

All Councillors agreed that the payments should be made.

**Vote 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

## 12. Review tree Survey and agree works to be completed

The Clerk confirmed that she had received 2 quotes and was waiting for the third. It was agreed that this would be considered at the January planning meeting when 3 quotes could be considered for the required work.

**Action: Agenda item for January planning meeting.**

## 13. Allotments

### 1. Discuss and agree potential sites for allotments at Vobster – including rent and terms

After extension investigation it has been established that the quality of the soil at the potential site in Vobster is not suitable for allotments. The Clerk has asked the land owner if a neighbouring section of land could be considered.

**Action: Clerk to progress the enquiry**

### 2. Consider whether to progress with the Somerset County Council Emergency Climate Fund Grant

Sam Shaw of Somerset County Council has confirmed extra time will be allowed to investigate new location for the allotments.

**Action: Clerk to keep SCC informed.**

#### **14. Meetings to attend or attended**

19/01/22 @ 7pm @ the Hub - Jubilee Meeting

01/03/22 @ 7pm - Frome Town Council Local Community Network meeting on Zoom

03/02/22 @ 3.30 – 5.30pm – Local Government reorganisation board meeting

17/02/22 @ 6 – 9pm – Town & Parish Council Conference – Connecting connections developing peer to peer support.

#### **15. Correspondence**

There was none.

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

Scribe Accounts – It was agreed that the Clerk would find further details about the package for discussion at the next meeting.

*Action: Agenda item for the January planning meeting.*

Clerk to send the unabridged version of Holcombe Emergency plan.

*Action: Clerk to send unabridged version to Cllr Paterson and Cllr Bell.*

#### **17. Date of Next Meetings:**

26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – Monthly meeting

9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 – Planning meeting

Meeting finished at 21.30hrs