

# Parish Council of Coleford

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## Minutes of the Parish Council Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### Present

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

The Clerk Vickie Watts took the minutes

### 1. Public Forum

- 1.1 The Clerk read out three emails from residents who highlighted concern over the possibility of the green space at Beacon View being returned to allotments.
- 1.2 An email had been received asking if the green at Beacon View was owned by the Parish Council whether they would be prepared to allow an independent group of people to re-establish allotments as a going concern.

*Action: Clerk to reply to say that options for new allotments are being reviewed*

- 1.3 There was concern raised over the siting of a portable toilet located on Church Street near the rear of the Scout Hall as it looks particularly unstable.

*Action: Clerk to report to supplier*

- 1.4 Cllr Turner said that the weed growth at the edge of the highway near Harris Vale is bad and needs clearing.

*Action: Clerk to report to Mendip District Council*

### 2. Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

Cllr Barrett, Conn, Hanney, Harding, Townsend and Talbot had sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

### 3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensation granted since last meeting

There were none.

### 4. Approve Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 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: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

*Action: Clerk to upload to the website.*

### 5. Matters arising

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

- Clerk to arrange a skip for Goodeaves for a village clean up

- Suggestion of the installation of a bin next to the bench at the small green area at the entrance to Beacon View.
- Clerk to establish when the next PACT meeting will take place.

*Action: Clerk to undertake tasks*

Cllr Evans asked if there was an update on the car sales being conducted from the Royal British Legion car park. It was alleged that the person selling the cars had permission and was paying to do so. After discussion it was agreed that it wasn't the Parish Councils business to get involved in matters which were on private property. If members of the public were concerned about on street parking, then they can report it directly to the Street Trading License team who will investigate and take action if appropriate.

## **6. Presentation by Sarah Halford - Proposal for new 3G Pitch to replace the Hard Courts at Highbury. Discuss and decide whether to proceed and apply for grant funding.**

Ms Halford was unable to attend but the Clerk ran through the presentation which she had put together outlining the proposed plan.

It was proposed by Cllr Allen and seconded by Cllr Ham that a working party be set up with Cllrs Ham, Allen, Pearce, Sarah Halford, Kie Rashleigh and the Clerk to establish the desired technical specification before obtaining quotes from potential suppliers and applying for grant funding. Mendip District Council Community Grants are offering up to £30K with the deadline for applications being the 31<sup>st</sup> of August.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to coordinate working party*

## **7. Reports**

7.1 PCSO – A newsletter had been received covering the last 3 months which gave the following breakdown for Coleford:

Arson and criminal damage	3
Public order offences	1
Sexual offences	1
Theft	2
Vehicle offences	1
Violence against the person	8

*Action: Clerk to ask when the next PSCT meeting will take place.*

### 7.2 Somerset County Council report

County Cllr Ham confirmed that the County Council is currently waiting for the outcome on the Unitary debate which was expected during the next week. Both Stronger Somerset and One Somerset have spent large sums of money on promoting themselves as the successful party.

### 7.3 Mendip District Council report

District Cllr Ham and Townsend submitted the following joint report:  
Cabinet:

The meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> July was delayed to 12<sup>th</sup> due to 'technical issues'. The long-awaited response regarding the offensive spoof website promoting Stronger Somerset was considered to be a whitewash. The issue of compensation for harm done to the Council's reputation is being pursued. The Secretary of State's decision on the Unitary way ahead is expected by 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

The 2020/21 Year End Outturn is expected to show a deficit of some £700k largely due to the reduced income and extra costs due to Covid, which have not been totally compensated by HMG. This will be covered by management of reserves, as will the expected shortfall for 21/22. Despite large borrowings at low interest rates in the year no new commercial investments have been made to compensate for the shortfall.

Planning:

Tonight's Planning Board is considering 3 large applications for 345 houses on the Keyford side of Frome. If approved they will contribute significantly towards rectifying Mendip's 5-year housing shortfall.

For the updated Local Plan Part 2 the Inspector's Final Report is scheduled for the end of July with formal adoption at the end of September. Confirmation of these timescales has been requested from Mendip. The Gladman appeal is programmed to start on 18<sup>th</sup> August on a virtual basis. Contact has been made with Mendip to see how we can best work with them to defend the appeal. We need to contact our planning consultant to co-ordinate our approach

## 8. Planning Applications

[2021/1500/TPO](#) - Ash (A) - Reduce height by up to 6m and reduce the end-weight of all large lateral limbs by 20%, thin crown by 20%.

14 Preachers Vale Coleford Frome Radstock Somerset BA3 5PT

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. Cllr Ham proposed and Cllr Evans seconded that the applications should be approved but that Mendip District Council should complete a site visit to take a look at other trees which are close by that also have Ash die back.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to notify the Planning Office.*

## 9. Planning updates

There were none.

## 10. Update on the Coleford Royal British Legion application to be a Community Value Asset

Mendip District Council have agreed to the Parish Councils bid that the Royal British Legion, Coleford should be classified as an Asset of Community Value. This will make it much more difficult for the owners, the RBL headquarters, to sell it off without the village having a chance to raise funds to purchase it. On the evening of Thursday 8th July Cllrs Banks, Ham and Townsend attended the Mendip Panel to promote the case.

The Panel were impressed by the quality of the Parish Council's proposal, the many letters of support, the number of signatures on the petition and took on board the unique role the facility offers in the village with its wide range of uses. The absence of any representation from the owners was noted. They then went into closed session to make their decision which they announced on Friday. This will last of 5 years – up to 9<sup>th</sup> July 2026.

## 11. Update on Highways including:

11.1 Councillor update. Cllr Townsend provided the following update:

1. HGV signage, Dark Lane and approaches. (Additional Signage to deter HGV Traffic) Forwarded to Sara Davis (Traffic Team For consideration)
2. Potholes, south end of Cherry Gardens Lane. Area Superintendent to monitor and action in accordance with Highway Safety Inspection Manual.
3. Charmborough Lane - edge erosion. Area Superintendent to monitor and action in accordance with Highway Safety Inspection Manual.
4. Stoke Bottom, potholes, edge erosion. Area Superintendent to action in accordance with Highway Safety Inspection Manual.
5. Soho, junction signage. Request for advance signage and refurbishment of existing lines. Forwarded to Sara Davis (Traffic Team for consideration)
6. Anchor Rd footpath, SIS. Noted. Parish to liaise with SIS team.
7. Co-op junction, SIS. Noted. Parish to liaise with SIS team
8. Holcombe, Duke of Cumberland, signage, Barlake Lane obstruction. Request for delineation markings between car park and highway. Forwarded to Sara Davis (Traffic Team for consideration) A site meeting to be held with Highways on 16th July
9. Verge Cutting, Charmborough Lane to Charlton Rd, plus Mells straight. Urgent visibility cut ordered for Junction. For information and awareness, the attached word document provides information for the Grass Cutting programme. This was done the day after meeting.
10. Ham Hill, potholes various. Area Superintendent to monitor and action in accordance with Highway Safety Inspection Manual.
11. Stockhill, overhanging foliage. Agreed that not a safety issue.

12. Farley Dell, hidden street name signage. Highways would not agree to the obscured sign being attached to the street light at Farley Dell. The suggestion is that the 2 signs for Farley Dell just inside the junction with Anchor Rd should be modified to add the road numbers for the left and right side of Farley Dell. Clerk has already written to Mendip District Council.

With reference to the gully cleansing programme SCC provide a drain cleaning service which includes road drains on all highways maintained by SCC throughout Somerset. As the Highway Authority we operate a planned maintenance programme for cleaning highway surface water drains.

A drainage cleansing policy / gully emptying cycle is undertaken on a risk-based approach, whereby gullies are emptied more frequently in areas where there is a risk of flooding, this is designed to allow flexibility to respond to need. The planned maintenance programme will be as follows:-

Flood Susceptible Areas – Once a Year.

Non - Flood Susceptible, Rural Areas – Once Every 2 Years.

Non-Flood Susceptible, Urban Areas – Once Every 4 Years.

Our records indicate that the majority of gullies within Coleford were cleaned in 2020 as part of the Four-Yearly programme. We will continue to respond to reports of blocked drains and action accordingly.

11.2 Report of new issues

There were no new issues to report.

11.3 Update on the footpath on Anchor Road

Cllr Ham continues to follow up with Somerset Highways to get this matter resolved.

*Action: Cllr Ham to continue to progress.*

## 12. Finance

12.1 Discuss Halecombe Quarry Community Fund

Cllr Ham explained that applications for the first round of funding is 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. The Clerk to recirculate via Facebook for local groups to apply.

*Action: Clerk re-circulate information.*

12.2 Review 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter budget Review

The Clerk had circulated the spreadsheet showing the income and expenditure for the first quarter of the current financial year 2021/22. Cllr Townsend had suggested that a column showing revised forecast should then be added which all agreed would be included for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter review. It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Banks that the budget accurately showed the current financial situation.

***Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained***

12.3 Accounts approved for payments

The following invoices were presented for payment:

HMRC – Clerks National Insurance	£ 31.37
Clerk Expenses	£ 42.92
Water 2 Business – Changing rooms water	£114.95
Ben Windel – Repair to Fingerpost	£199.80
Playsafety Limited – Annual Inspection	£427.80
Somerset Playing Field Association Annual membership	£ 15.00
LSJ Gardening Services – Grass cutting	£912.50
Alvian Play & Recreation – Tower & refix chains on nest swing	£408.00
Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) - Annual Fee	£616.88
Reeds Agri – Fencing materials for Beacon View	£261.46

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Banks that the invoices should be paid.

***Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions***

### 13. Review of policies:

1. Financial regulations
2. Code of conduct
3. Standing orders

The Clerk had circulated the abovementioned policies for consideration prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Ham that they should all be approved on the basis that they remained unchanged from the previous year.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

### 14. Discuss Coleford Parish Councils Facebook profile. Review & agree policy

The Clerk has set up a Coleford Parish Council profile so that Coleford Parish Council business can be shared without the Clerk having to use her personal profile. It was agreed that the social media policy would be updated to include this and would be adopted.

The Clerk said that the Parish Council should be looking at setting up email address for Council use rather than using personal email addresses. This will be an agenda item for August.

*Action: Clerk to investigate Parish Council email addresses. Agenda item for August.*

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

### 15. Consider request to hold a school year end party on Highbury playing field using electricity supply from the changing rooms.

The request is no longer required as they are now using the Hub.

### 16. Discuss way forward for the Allotments and the Climate Emergency Grant including considering other potential sites.

After the recent decision to no longer pursue Highbury Playing Field as the location for new allotments that Clerk had requested that the Planning application be put on hold. It was proposed by Cllr Drescher and seconded by Cllr Allen that the planning application should be officially withdrawn and the new potential sites at Vobster, Newbury Lane, Beacons View and behind the Legion be further investigated to establish if they could be suitable for allotments.

Cllr Evans left the meeting at 20.45hrs

**Vote 6 For, Against, 0 Abstentions**

It was agreed that Cllrs Ham, Conn, Drescher and Barret would undertake the site visits and report back to the August meeting.

It was also agreed that the Clerk would contact everyone on the waiting list to establish if they would still be interested in taking an allotment if it was outside of the village boundary.

*Action: Clerk to withdraw the planning application. Clerk to contact people on the waiting list. Cllrs Ham, Conn, Drescher and Barrett to visit potential sites. Agenda Item for August.*

### 17. Grass cutting including:

#### 17.1 Update on the new grass cutting contract agreed

Cllr Ham explained that he and Cllr Conn and the Clerk had met with Jamie of LSJ Gardening Services to discuss the grass cutting contract. After much discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would have to pay £7300 for the rest of the current cutting season with the following 2 years agreed at £10950. This would include the annual strim of the butterfly bank and pump track. Although this is more than budgeted Jamie has now got on top of the long grass and all areas are much improved.

Jamie has requested that a direct debit be set up for 7 payments of £912.50 for the rest of the current year. (Total of 8 including the cheque written at this meeting totals £7300).

**Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to prepared paperwork for direct debit. Agenda item for August*

- 17.2 Hedge cutting around sign at Lipyeate  
Cllr Townsend to speak with the landowner.

*Action: Cllr Townsend to progress. Agenda item for August.*

- 17.3 Consider quotes for hedge cutting contract  
To be adjourned to allow further quotes to be sought.

*Action: Clerk to seek further quotes. Agenda item for August.*

- 17.4 Grass cutting of fence line between playing field and Newbury Hill and creosoting fence  
Clerk to approach the Community Payback team to establish if they are planning to return to Coleford in the near future now that lockdown is easing. This could be a job for the team.

*Action: Clerk to contact Payback team for an update. Agenda item for August.*

**18. Consider quotes received for Tree Survey for Coleford Parish Council owned land**

The Clerk presented two quotes, Hillside Trees £1440 and Idverde £300. Included in the price would be the height, age, species in both common and scientific nomenclature, observations, recommendations and a target rating. If any remedial works are recommended then a priority rating based on months is also added to the pro forma.

It was noted that the quotes did not include the trees at Orchard Close which needed to be added. It was proposed by Cllr Allen and seconded by Cllr Drescher that the Clerk would accept the quote provided by Idverde and negotiate the best price for the trees at Orchard Close.

*Action: Clerk to progress the tree survey with Idverde. Agenda item for August.*

**19. Consider annual inspection reports for Coleford Play areas**

In light of Cllr Conn and Harding being absent it was agreed that this would be considered at the August meeting.

*Action: Agenda item for August.*

**20. Consider and Approve Memorial application**

The Clerk had received two memorial applications. Michel Prigent from Curtis Ilott and Richard Horler from Andrew James Carved Stone Letters. Both were within the Councils permitted size and type of material with agreeable inscriptions which all Councillors agreed should be approved.

**Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to notify the applicants*

Cllr Turner highlighted that there were several bushes in the cemetery that needed to be cut back, one of which is causing deterioration of a family memorial that they are hoping to replace. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek quotes to cut back the bushes.

*Action: Clerk to seek quotes to cut back bushes in the Cemetery.*

Cllr Turner said that he would be looking to renovate a bench installed in the cemetery some time ago as a memorial to his parents.

**21. Update from @ the Hub**

Cllr Ham confirmed that the Hub would be looking to re-open on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July. A new Cleaner has started. Negotiations on the lease are still ongoing with Somerset County Council.

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

Cllr Ham attended a meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> July regarding the bus service. Somerset County Council are investing money into the service. There will be a second meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July which Cllr Ham will also attend.

Mendip District Council will be holding a virtual meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July to discuss the community and climate grants currently available.

Carbon Literacy training – No action at this time

Somerset Association of Local Council Training events – Councillors to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend.

## **23. Correspondence**

23.1 Royal Communications regarding the Queens Platinum Jubilee Central Weekend  
2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 highlighting the national program of events.

*Action: Agenda item for August.*

23.2 Somerset County Council – Representatives on the Pension Board.  
No action required

23.3 Active and In Touch – Mendip District Council

*Action: Clerk to invite Dougie to come and give presentation at a future meeting*

23.4 A parishioner had sent an email seeking information / history on their home. Councillors agreed that Steve Hodges may be able to help.

*Action: Clerk to action.*

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

There were no points discussed.

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

21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 - Annual meeting of the Parish & Planning meeting

11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 – Parish Council meeting

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

Wed 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

Annual Meeting of the Parish followed by the Planning meeting

Weds 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Monthly Parish Council meeting

Meeting finished at 21.50hrs