

Parish Council of Coleford

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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 22nd April 2020

Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Allen, Banks, Barrett, Conn, Drescher, Evans, Hanney, Townsend and Turner.

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

Public Forum

- PF 1 The Clerk thanked Cllr Drescher for installing the goal posts at the Coleford Playing Field.
- PF 2 Cllr Ham thanked Cllr Drescher for completing the renovation work to the youth shelter seating, which is now ready for painting.
- PF 3 It was asked if the Mendip District Council owned land will have the grass cut during this lock down period. Clerk to ask Idverde.

VW

1 Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

No apologies were received.

2 Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

3 Nomination of The Eagle Inn, Coleford as an Asset of Community Value

Mendip District Council had contacted the Parish Council and asked if we wanted to support the application which had been lodged with Mendip District Council by a group of Coleford residents nominating The Eagle Inn as an asset of community value.

Cllr Banks said that the person who has applied for the application was very enthusiastic and should be given a chance to get the application through.

Cllr Townsend had spoken with Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) who are experienced at helping to fight pub closures. They have seen the supporting statements provided by the applicant for the planning application to convert the The Eagle Inn into flats and they felt that the pub offered poor value when compared to other pubs in Somerset which were also on the market. It was also questionable whether the pub had been marketed in line with the requirements.

Cllr Ham expressed concern that the closure of the Eagle would leave only 1 pub in the village about a mile away and with difficult road access. Many Eagle customers walk to the pub, this would be denied to them

It was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Banks that the following points should be sent to support the application:

Coleford Parish Council fully supports the application for the Eagle Public House to be identified as a Community Asset by Mendip District Council, for the following reasons:-

1. Coleford is a large village, population about 2300, and has only one other pub
2. The Eagle is relatively central to the main part of the village and close to the main playing field, where village events are held. It is on the main route through the village and is therefore in a good position to attract custom. The other village pub is in Lower Coleford and is therefore not in the main part of the village.
3. The application reflects concern in the local community.

VOTE: 10 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions

Cllr Ham explained that the Planning Officer for the application to convert the pub into flats had advised that he wanted to approve the application, which was against the Parish Councils recommendation to refuse. The District Councillors therefore had the choice of whether to agree with the planning officer and recommend approval or have the application referred to the planning board for the final decision. In light of the pending Nomination for Community Asset and the concerns regarding the marketing process, lack of evidence supplied, parking issues and the closure of the only pub in the top of the village, it was agreed that the District Councillors would request that the application be referred to the planning board.

VOTE: 10 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions

*Zoom meeting stopped and restarted.
All Councillors were present apart from Cllr Drescher.*

4

Planning Applications

2019/2345/OTS - Consider and respond to Gladman's response to the issues raised by County Highways and ourselves

Cllr Townsend had circulated a brief response from Key Transport which outlined that the issues surrounding the splays could easily be remedied by the applicant extending the 30mph zone. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Townsend that the Parish Council should not proceed with a second report from Key transport to respond to the latest highways information supplied by the applicant in this application which would cost £750.

Councillors agreed that they should concentrate on the strong argument surrounding Charmborough Lane and how it would not be safe to increase the numbers of users on this route in and out of Coleford. The minimum width for a single carriageway is understood to be 5.5m. Cllr Townsend will try to establish from the Transport Consultant which policy document do Highways and Mendip rely on for width requirement. Cllr Townsend and Cllr Banks will undertake measurements along the lane and take photographs of the bends to be compiled into a report which could also include photographs of incidents where there have been delays due to larger vehicles blocking the lane. All Councillors supported the proposed action.

AT

It was therefore proposed by Councillor Townsend and seconded by Councillor Conn that

1. Councillors Townsend and Banks carry out the investigations of Charmborough Lane described above AT/HB
2. The Transport Consultant be thanked for their quote, but there seems little to be gained from spending money when Gladman do appear to have sorted the access issues with the 30 limit extension. AT

VOTE: 9 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions
(Cllr Drescher not connected)

Update on Local Plan Part II

Many letters had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting which highlighted reasons why other local Parish Councils and BANES were objecting to the Local Plan Part II.

Cllr Townsend reported that planning decisions have to be made in accordance with a valid Local Plan. If a Local Plan is not valid there is a presumption in favour of Sustainable development.

In 2018/19 Coleford Parish Council as part of the MDC Local Plan process submitted a site on Newbury Lane offering 21 dwellings as a preferred location for development. During the same process Gladman proposed the site off Anchor Rd to Mendip. During the Inspectors review he recommended that only the Newbury site be accepted.

During the Inspector's public examination Cllrs Townsend and Ham confirmed the Parish Council's support for Newbury Lane and objection to Anchor Rd. Gladman did not contest the position.

Cllr Drescher rejoined the meeting

Also as a result of the new Government's new housing strategy it transpired that Mendip needed to increase the annual build from 420 to 604 per year. In the Inspectors Main Modifications paper it stated that Mendip needed to find an additional 505 dwelling sites in the north east of the District. Mendip's response was to locate 420 on the edge of Radstock/Norton, north of the White Post, with the balance spread between Rode, Norton St Philip and Beckington.

BANES and the villages have objected with letters to the Ministry and David Warburton MP on the basis that there has been no consultation with these communities about the new allocations and the process was therefore invalid. They all express the view that their local infrastructure, especially highways, are inadequate. The Inspector's letter of 3-4-20 confirms he will consult on the additional 505 dwellings, however the timing is dependent on the Covid 19 situation. Parishes affected by the 505 are concerned that the whole process will go on too long so that developers can take advantage of the lack of an agreed Plan. They think that a stake should be put in the ground now for LPP2 and the revised numbers should then be part of the LPP1 review which was scheduled to start last December. Mendip's position is that the Local Plan as a whole is not out of date, only certain policies. However although we have been delivering well above the previous target of 420 pa, against the new target of 604 we can only show a 3.8 year forward supply.

Stoke St Michael have a similar application to Anchor Rd along Coalpit Lane for up to 47 houses. This is outside development limits and was not put forward by Mendip as a suitable site in the LPP2 consultation. The Mendip Planning Policy Consultation Response on this application is one of continued rejection. Cllr Townsend asked Mendip, the same planning officer, to confirm this will be their position on Anchor Rd.

Cllr Ham proposed that in light of the following facts, a letter be put together by the Clerk to be sent to Tracy Aarons of Mendip District Council, the Planning Policy Team and David Warburton MP before the 24th April 2020 covering the points raised highlighting:

VW

- Coleford is on the North East Boundary of Mendip
- Most children of secondary school age travel to BANES schools.
- Most Coleford people travel to work to BANES through the route of Charmbrough lane which is neither suitable nor safe. They also use this route for shopping and leisure activities
- The population / work ratio is out of kilter in South BANES and road network overloaded i.e. Double roundabout in Radstock.
- The Anchor road site (Gladman) is not in the local plan part 2 like the other sites around the White post, Norton St Philip, Beckington and Rode.
- Support request that Mendip District Council Local Plan Part 2 be adopted and move on to a new Mendip District Council Local Plan Part 1

VOTE: 10 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions

6 Acknowledge the Clerk Pension Actuarial

The Clerk confirmed that she had received the final version of the Pension Actuarial which stated that the Parish Council would be invoiced the £200 for payment in September 2020. All Councillors agreed that this would be paid when the invoice was received.

VOTE: 10 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions

7 Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion

7.1 Annual Meeting of the Parish - Cllr Ham proposed that the Annual Meeting of the Parish would not take place this year due to the restrictions in place resulting from Covid 19. It will return as usual in 2021.

7.2 Annual Parish Council meeting – This will take place as usual on the 13th May using the Zoom technology.

7.3 Dagaroo – Dagmar is providing hot meals 5 days a week and providing free meals to approx. 8 people 3 times a week. A report will be provided in the near future showing how the money Parish Council donation has been spent.

7.4 Wainwrights donation – Wainwrights have agreed a donation of £500 towards Dagaroo and £500 towards the food bank. The funds will be paid to the Parish Council which will then be paid immediately to Dagaroo and the Foodbank. The Clerk to write a letter of thanks on behalf of the parish.

VW

7.5 The Clerk stated that the Zoom upgrade would be purchased with the cost of £119 being split between the 3 parishes, namely Coleford, Holcombe & Cranmore.

VW

VOTE: 10 For 0 Against 0 Abstentions

8 Date of Next Meetings:

Wed 13th May 2020 Annual Parish Council meeting followed by the usual monthly meeting.