

# 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 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

### **1. Present**

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Allen, Banks, Barrett, Conn, Drescher, Evans, Hanney, Pearce, and Turner. 7 members of the public attended.

### **1. Public Forum**

There were no points raised.

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

Cllrs Townsend had emailed to say that he hoped to be able to join the meeting later as but had to attend the Mendip District Council Planning board hearing. If it overrun he would not be able to make it.

### **3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting**

There were none

### **4. Co-option of Councillor**

It was agreed that this would be adjourned until the December meeting.

### **5. Planning Applications**

It was agreed that the planning applications would be considered later in the meeting to allow Cllr Townsend time to join the meeting if possible.

### **6. Consider quotes for completing the Grass Cutting Contract 2020**

The Clerk explained that the previous Contractor had left the contract without completing the all of the contract work. Quotes had been sought from 3 contractors as follows:

Hedge cutting - To be completed before the end of February  
All 4 hedges at the Parish Council Cemetery plus the front hedge at Church Street Garden.  
Combe Garden Maintenance £500 no VAT  
Ben Windel £400 + VAT  
Shepton Mallet Landscaping – No quote received

Strimming - To be completed at the earliest opportunity.  
All banks at the pump track, Highbury Playing Field  
Butterfly bank at Coleford Playing Field  
Combe Garden Maintenance £380 no VAT  
Ben Windel £355 + VAT  
Shepton Mallet Landscaping – No quote received

It was proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Conn that the quotes from Ben Windel of £400 and £355 + VAT be accepted.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to notify all contractors**

**7. Discuss and agree Grass Cutting Contract 2021/22**

Cllr Conn confirmed that the previous contract had been reviewed and it had been decided that the hedge cutting would be removed to create a new contract. The previous contract had been for 2 years but Cllr Conn said that he thought 3 year contract may be of more interest to larger contractors.

It was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Ham that both contracts would be amended as suggested by Cllr Ham to include a clause stating the contract term of 2 years could be extended to 3 years if the first 2 had been satisfactory. The contracts to be advertised in the Radstock Journal and Frome Times as well as sent to known contractors. Sealed quotes would then be opened at the January meeting.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to place the advertisement  
Send out information to known contractors**

**8. Discuss request for Electric Car charging point in the village**

An email had been received asking the Parish Council to consider installing electric car charging points within the parish. During discussion there were lots of questions on where they could be sited and how they might be managed. It was acknowledged that the technology for this was fast moving and that further research would be needed before consideration. The Clerk had received supplier information on charging points which would be circulated for comment. It was agreed that further research would be required before bring back to a future meeting.

**Action: Clerk to seek further information/guidance  
Agenda item for January meeting**

**9. Discuss budget and precept 2021/22**

The Clerk had circulated a first draft of the 2021/22 budget to help calculate the precept for the year. The precept request needs to be submitted to Mendip District Council in January. It was agreed that the Clerk would request the figures from Mendip District Councils finance team which help to understand how any changes to the precept will impact on the parishioners. Councillors were asked to consider the draft budget ready for discussion at the December meeting.

**Action: Clerk to seek precept calculations from Mendip District Council  
Agenda item for December meeting**

**10. Update on the Somerset County Council Climate Emergency Fund bid**

Cllr Conn confirmed that the consultation has been displayed on the Parish website, Facebook page and notice boards. At this point there had not been a huge response from people volunteering to help. It was stated in guidance for the grant application that SCC would look for evidence of parishioner support.

It was agreed that the Clerk would repost the information on the Coleford Echo Facebook page to further consult and seek support from members of the village.

Cllr Conn said that he wanted to write to the Charity Commission regarding the proposals for the Highbury Playing Fields but needed further information from the Clerk to do so. He would circulate the draft letter when ready.

**Action: Clerk to repost on The Coleford Echo Facebook page  
Clerk to pass on Charity Commission information to Cllr Conn**

**11. Update of Royal British Legion (Coleford) Asset of Community Value**

Cllr Ham confirmed that the managing committee for the Coleford Legion are happy for the Parish Council to proceed with the application to make the Legion an asset of community value. Cllr Ham will arrange a meeting of the working party to complete the application

**Action: Cllr Ham to arrange meeting and complete the application**

## 12. Correspondence

There was none.

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

- 13.1. Beacon View Drainage issue – The Clerk explained that as previously agreed, Ben Windel had cut back the overhanging hedge, cleared the ditch and dug by hand in an attempt to locate the drain pipe outlet, but was not successful. As a next step he suggested bringing in the digger to expand the search at a cost of £250 plus VAT per day. Cllr Ham proposed and Cllr Conn seconded that the work should be done to try and resolve the issue.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to notify the contractor**

- 13.2. Memorial Application for Mr Howard Moore - The Clerk confirmed that the application, which had been submitted by Curtis Illott, fitted the criteria and was within specification. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Barrett that the application be approved.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to notify the contractor**

- 13.3. Christmas Lights in Coleford Competition – The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to Nicky Halford of Time is Precious who confirmed they would be delighted to receive financial support for the Christmas Lights event. It was proposed by Cllr Drescher and seconded by Cllr Conn that £200 be donated as prize money for the event. £75 for 1<sup>st</sup> prize, £50 for 2<sup>nd</sup> and £25 for 3<sup>rd</sup>. The final £50 be donated directly to Time is Precious. It is hoped that the event will be embraced by Parishioners to lift spirits and raise funds for the charity.

**Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to liaise with Nicky Halford to arrange payments.**

## 14. Planning Updates

### 14.1 2020/0792/REM - Hillside Farm, Newbury Hill, Coleford, BA3 5RU

Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval 2019/1161/OTS for the erection of a 1 agricultural workers dwelling and attached annexe with details of access. Matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be determined.  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions

### 14.2 2020/1377/VRC - Crossway Garage Anchor Road Coleford Frome BA3 5PG

Application to vary condition 2 of planning approval 2017/0600/FUL for the demolition of existing garage building and development of proposed convenience store and 1 dwelling house with associated external works  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions. For information, this is not the most recent application to vary conditions, which proposed a flat roof and was withdrawn after adverse comments by the PC and MDC.

### 14.3 2020/1033/FUL - Springwater Farm Anchor Road Coleford Frome Somerset BA3 5GX

Erection of a single detached residential dwelling, garage and associated development  
After a significant delay the financial information has appeared on the website which shows 3 years worth of accounts which show a profit.

## 15. Planning Applications

### 15.1 2020/2183/OTA Proposed Erection of an Eco Barn Dwelling, Pippit Barn Lipyeate Cross To Luckington Cross Coleford, BA3 5EL

Cllr Conn said that he had considered the plans and proposed that the application be refused on the basis that it was a single house in an isolated location. If it was intended to be essential accommodation for a rural worker then there was no supporting evidence to show this. Therefore the application did not meet the criteria in Local Plan policy CP4, which should be applied.

The application relies on the National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) reference to dwellings being permitted in isolated locations, if they are “of the highest standards” with “exceptional design”. It was noted that the property was a simply designed, passive house and there is nothing to make it or the site exceptional under that policy. There is also lots of sub division of the land in this area and allowing permission for a house would potentially for ribbon development.

Cllr Pearce noted that the application stated that the site was a greyfield site but it is not, it’s greenfield and therefore should not be developed.

Cllr Conn proposed and Cllr Pearce seconded that the application be refused on the basis that:

1. The design is not exceptional or of the highest standard and does not meet the criteria in the Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework
2. The proposed location is a greenfield site outside of the development line

**Vote: 8 For, 0 Against and 2 Abstention ( 1 x District Councillor)**

**Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer**

15.2 2020/2201/OTS Outline planning application for the erection of up to 63 dwellings with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS), a vehicular access point from Anchor Road. All matters reserved except for means of access (resubmission of 2019/2345/OTS) Land Off Anchor Road, Lipyate Cross To Luckington Cross, Coleford

Cllr Ham read out a report prepared by Cllr Townsend:

The resubmission of the application is legitimate, even though it’s identical to the one turned down. Remembering that they were turned down on the basis of “a significantly harmful visual impact”, the new application merely states that they will be submitting more detailed landscape plans to show how the concerns will be addressed. Mendip have agreed that they will formally go out for consultation when the document is received.

The letter has been sent to our MP David Warburton expressing our concern that the application will be swept up by the need to build another 505 dwellings in the north east of the District. It also expressed our doubt that the Government Housing Needs algorithm is relevant when it requires Mendip to produce over 1000 houses a year when the ONS prediction is that Mendip’s population will only grow by 7000 between 2018 and 2028. Also our concern that the stop to all new builds which drain into the Levels because of alleged phosphate pollution will put more pressure on our area which doesn’t drain that way.

The Parish Council consultant agrees that the Brochure should form the basis of our reply, pointing out the issues that have not been properly addressed. For example sewerage - the new application includes a sewage report, it’s the one from July 2019. Mendip never received a direct reply from Wessex Water last time – Cllr Townsend will write direct to them himself. A resident has also produced a list of issues experienced in the village which had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Are there anymore to add?

Highways - the visibility splay and 30 mph sign sightlines will be raised again. But mainly Charmborough Lane - More photos are online showing incidents with HGVs, more would be welcome to add to the previous pack.

Travel Plan - the unhelpful remark from Mr Hobbs on the Planning Board that villagers were too lazy to cycle to services and employment. The ignorance is appalling. Do we have support to carry out the survey of residents in the north of the village to ask their work/school/shopping destinations and their modes of travel?

Local Plan - the Inspector’s examination resumed yesterday. The additional 505 dwellings in the north east of the District is the main subject. All sites under consideration are more sustainable than Coleford. We may get some further clues before our response goes in.

An email had been received from the Planning Consultant which stated as follows:

Local Plan:

- The further hearing sessions are well underway.
- The Council have identified up to 536 homes towards the identified need for 505.
- The bulk of the growth is, and should be, focussed on the edges of MSN and Radstock as the most sustainable locations and largest settlements.

- 20% of the additional is already planned for in 3 primary villages which is consistent with the wider distribution of growth across Mendip.
- Gladmans had an opportunity to promote their site for growth however the Council's preferred approach of only consider those sites put forward for the 2014 plan is a fair and robust system and one which evidently is more than capable of accommodating the required growth.
- Greater weight must now be given to the plan as it has advanced further since the last application was refused.
- The Consultant will undertake an exercise looking at housing permissions post the last refusal on unallocated sites, as arguably these should be included as supply to reduce the 505 figure.

General note on the brochure:

- Some updating to reflect the resubmission and the changes in terms of planning policy but ostensibly a similar document.
- The Consultant to add some text in respect of the Wavendon case.
- The Consultant to add some text about the need to be consistent in decision making... i.e. a reminder to officers they cannot disregard the decision of the Members in their consideration of this re-application.
- The Parish Council can submit an addendum to the brochure/ revised brochure once the further information on landscaping has come forward.

The Chairman invited comments from Councillors and members of the public, concern was raised over the inadequate roads and the sewage system which is already under pressure. Cllr Banks stated that any issues with the already overloaded drainage would be the responsibility of the developer

It was noted that CPRE had written a letter objecting to the development. A member of the public had emailed a detailed record of the problems experienced with the drains in the area

It was asked if the application has been turned down for one reason could it now be turned down on other grounds. It was confirmed that any new evidence will be legitimate and the planning officer will have all of the original evidence before them to consider.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Banks that having heard the report from Cllr Townsend, the Planning Consultant Mark Reynolds and the letter from CPRE and other residents attending; that the Parish Council strongly objects to the application, for the reasons listed above.

**Vote: 8 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention (District Councillor)**

**16. Date of Next Parish Council meeting - Wed 9th December 2020**