

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24th November 2021

Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Banks, Drescher, Evans, Paterson, Pearce and Townsend.
There were no members of the public present

1. Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

Cllr Barratt, Harding and Turner sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

2. Update on the Gladman application and decide if there is to be any further action

Cllr Ham and Cllr Townsend said that having spoken to parishioners who were initially keen to offer financial support to take the decision to a Judicial Review, that in light of the reports from the Planning Consultant and Barrister that there was little chance of success. It was therefore agreed that there was no point pursuing this further.

As ward members both Cllr Ham and Townsend have sent a letter to the Secretary of State, Michael Gove highlighting concerns over how the Gladman case has been dealt with and in particular the status of the Local Plan. A copy of the letter along with some supporting notes have been posted on the Facebook pages, encouraging other parishioners to also respond. After some initial confusion over which email address to use, it has been established that Correspondence@communities.gov.uk is the correct version.

Cllr Ham and Cllr Townsend said that they had arranged for a 15-minute meeting next week with MP David Warburton. It is hoped that they can raise the issue which is not just affecting Coleford but also Stoke St Michael, Leigh on Mendip, Chilcompton and the White Post. It is hoped that he will be able to take on the concerns and help to address them with The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities,

Cllr Townsend has written to the Woodland Trust about the Elm Tree. He recognized that established Elm trees can be purchase, however they are not native English Elms. There has also been conversation relating to whether the tree could be replanted in a more suitable location.

Cllr Townsend said that he was keen to issue a press release highlighting the implications of the outcome on the Gladman case, for submission to Somerset Live to raise awareness and support in lobbying government for action. It was suggested that Cllr Townsend prepares a draft for circulation to all Councilors after the meeting with MP David Warburton on Friday. Councilors will have until 10am on Monday to review the statement and comment before submission to Somerset Live later that day.

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Paterson that:

1. There would be no application for judicial review
2. A press release submitted on Monday 29th November to Somerset Live – content to be agreed by Councilors via email.

Vote 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Actions: Cllr Townsend to draft the statement.

Clerk to notify Councilors that they should comment before 10am on Monday.

3. Discuss and review the budget for 2022/23

The spreadsheet showing a draft budget currently shows a deficit of £6698 based on the precept remaining the same for the coming financial year. It was agreed that a 3rd quarter budget review should be completed at the end of December with the predicted year end figures being adjusted to help show a realistic view of what income and expenditure will be and what funds will be available in reserves. This information can then be used at the January meeting to help agree the level of precept required for 2022/23.

Action: Agenda item for January.

4. Consider quotes to create rainwater harvesting structure at Goodeaves Allotments

Cllr Ham predicted that materials to create a structure to capture rainwater would be no more than £500. A quote had been received from a contractor confirming that labour would be £300.

It was proposed by Cllr Ham that the project should proceed on the basis of the structure costing no more than a total of £800 which was seconded by Cllr Townsend.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and) Abstentions

Action: Cllr Ham to liaise with the contractor to get the work completed before Christmas.

5. Discuss potential site for new allotments

The Clerk had received 7 responses via Facebook from members of the parish that would be interested in taking on a new allotment if the new scheme was to go ahead. This takes the total to 10 when including the existing list and without heavy promotion.

It was agreed that the next step was to ensure that the soil at the new site is suitable for allotments. The Clerk and Cllr Ham will seek quotes to establish how much it will cost for someone to come and take the samples across the 4-acre site for analysis.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Ham to seek quotes for soil testing

It was agreed that Cllrs Banks, Drescher and Ham would meet to review the original application submitted and approved by Somerset County Council for the Climate Emergency Fund grant to consider what adjustments would need to be made for resubmission and approval.

Action: Cllrs Banks, Drescher and Ham to arrange an appropriate date to review the Climate Emergency grant application

6. Other matters raised

6.1 Emergency planning – Cllr Ham suggested that the Council may want to consider creating an emergency plan for the village. The Clerk said that this had been done several years ago in Holcombe and offered reassurance which you hope will never be required.

Action: Clerk to send a copy of Holcombe’s plan along with the video which highlights the benefits of creating a plan. Agenda item for January

6.2 Tree planting - Cllr Pearce said that NFU are offering free trees to members. There are 4 types of bundles made up of 45 plants, they are: ‘Hedge in fill bundle’ with hawthorn, willow and dogwood, ‘Copse bundle’ with English oak, wild cherry and silver birch, ‘Wildlife bundle’ with elder, beech and holly, and the ‘Wet woodland bundle’ with grey willow, alder and aspen. Each member can claim up to 3 bundles.

It was agreed that Councilors should consider whether there was an appropriate place to plant them.

6.3 Crossways Garage – It was noted that there was some work has started at the site. It has been rumoured that the co-op should be built and ready to open in April 2022.

6.4 Coleford Post Office service -The work to the new external door has been completed by @ The Hub and the Post Office Ltd have confirmed that the outreach service can resume on Monday 29th November from 12.30 til 3.30pm

6.5 Payments: The following invoices were presented for payment:

No 5 Chambers – Work on the Gladman case	£1440.00
Mark Reynolds – Work on the Gladman case	£1320.00
RBL wreath for Remembrance Day	£ 20.50

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Meeting ended at 20.55hrs