

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB

Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council

Tel: 07971 516916 / 01749 880428

Email: clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th November 2022

Present

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

There were 1 members of the public present. The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 A member of the parish reported that work at the new Co-op at the Crossways Garage site is now finished apart from the dropped the kerbs which needs to be installed by Somerset Highways. The house is waiting for the water to be connected.
- 1.2 The signage for the recent road diversions has caused confusion and needs to be addressed by Somerset Highways.
Action: Cllr Townsend to report to Somerset Highways
- 1.3 There has been a report of flooding at Beacon View. Water was coming from the drainage man hole cover and crossing the path, which has resulted in the soil being swept away from a neighbouring garden.
Action: Clerk to investigate.
- 1.4 A resident reported that they had experienced a scam call where the caller pretended to be the police saying that their debit card had been used. They then attempted to take the residents card details.
- 1.5 The hedges growing outside of Crossways Cottage on Highbury Street are impeding the path of pedestrians.
Action: Clerk to write to the home owner and request that the hedge be cut back.
- 1.6 A Councillor had received a request from a resident at Roman Way asking if the street lighting could be updated to LED version. Cllr Ham explained that this would be done as part of a role out program.
- 1.7 The street light sited above the junction outside of the Co-op is not working. The numbers 26 and 27 are marked on the nearest lampposts and it is unclear which relates to the lamp.
Action: Clerk to report

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Barrett, Cllr West and Cllr Moulding, which were accepted by the Chair.

3 Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4 Agree the minutes

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 12th October had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that they accurately reflected the meeting and should be approved.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to upload to website

5 Actions from the minutes

All actions had been completed or would be discussed as an agenda item apart from

It was noted that the notice board outside the piano shop was no longer as visible as it was when parishioners were visiting the post office and shop. It was agreed that the new co-op would be approached to establish if they would consider a new noticeboard outside the store.

Action: Clerk to write to the store manager at the earliest opportunity.

6 Co-option of Councillors

There is currently one vacancy, which the Clerk will continue to advertise.

7 Planning Applications

There were none.

8 Planning updates including enforcement issue

There were none.

9 Reports

9.1 PCSO – A generic report had been received and circulated. It did not mention Coleford specifically. It was noted that a PCSO had not attended a parish meeting for a long time.

9.2 Somerset County Council – Cllr Ham reported that the Council is predicting an overspend of £75 million for the year end. The districts have to find savings of £20 million leaving a deficit of £55 million which can only be addressed by cost shunting, cuts or an increase on council tax of 13%.

The gritting program is in place and on stand-by.

A new Lord Lieutenant is now in place after the previous retired after 8 years in office.

Everyone is encouraged to take the flu and covid vaccines as soon as they are offered.

9.3 Mendip District Council – Cllr Townsend and Ham provided the following report:

Planning - Leigh on Mendip successfully fought off the appeal by the developer for 40 houses on Quarry Road at the north east end of the village. The Planning Inspector accepted that Significant and Demonstrable harm would be caused to the setting of St Giles Church, a Grade 1 Listed building.

Cllrs Townsend attended the appeal against Mendip's refusal of 47 houses on Coalpit Lane, Stoke St Michael. The Inspector is the same Mr Rennie who handled the Gladman appeal, though on this occasion he did agree to carry out an accompanied site visit. The defence from Stoke is the harm to the setting of the Listed buildings at the Mill, the general harm to the countryside, and sustainability in terms of highways and facilities.

Torr Works – the Mendip Planning Board approved the application for a new concrete works. This facility will provide track bed material for the HS2 project under a contract already won and will provide up to 300 jobs.

10 Unitary update

1. Review of the Local Community Networks Consultation

The Clerk had circulated the minutes from the fortnightly Town and Parish Clerks meeting. There was nothing to report.

11 Update on the Community Review Project.

The Clerk explained that the steering group had sought feedback from the local community to establish what topics they felt needed to be covered within the Community review. There was a good response and feedback was varied and useful. At the recent meeting the group agreed 30 questions covering the 8 topics to form the questionnaire.

A flyer will be produced and delivered to every house in the village explaining the purpose of the review and how people can get involved. An article will be in On the Map and posters will also be displayed around the village and at local businesses. Social media and the website will also be utilised. As an incentive, everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a draw with adults winning £50 and under 18's £20 of vouchers.

An open day will be held on Saturday the 3rd December at the Hub from 10 until 2pm whereby people can drop in and fill in the online survey using the Parish laptop. Coffee and cake will be provided.

The Clerk asked that the Council covers the cost of the incentives and printing costs which total £141.28 which was agreed by all present.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to feed back to the group and ensure that advertising is

12 Highways including:

1. Councillor update – Cllr Townsend advised as follows:

- Brewery Lane - Highways advise that the Lane will have to be closed at the end of January for the marked-up edge erosion to be made good opposite the Dark Lane junction. Further erosion reported as you turn into Brewery Lane from Anchor Rd 100 yards up as the road narrows.
- Charmborough Lane - edge erosion at the far end on the left reported, further erosion to be reported opposite Lipyate House, and possible flooding.
- Stockhill - potholes reported at the right-hand bend opposite Hollow House.
- Mells Station Road - the raising of the road level appears to have solved the flooding problem; update needed in the light of recent heavy rain.
- Pedestrian Crossing - defective light reported at the Beacon View crossing.
- Stoke Bottom - the drainage works appear to have improved, but not solved, the flooding. To be reported to Highways plus edge erosion beyond the bridge on the left.

2. Approve the Parish Council response to letter received from Michele Cusack of Somerset Highways on 17/10/22

All present agreed that the letter circulated by the Clerk should be sent highlighting recent accidents on Charmborough Lane when the police did attend.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to send by email

3. Report of any new issues to be reported:

- The pothole on Charmborough Lane near Lipyate House has deteriorated and has been reported by Cllr Townsend
- A request was made to extend the pavement along Anchor Road from Anchor Road to the entrance of Farley Dell. It was explained that this had been subject to a Small Improvement Scheme which had to be revised to allow access for commercial vehicles into Springwater Farm. It was agreed that it may be possible to revisit this in the future.
- The footpath from Mendip Vale to Farley Dell is used as a safe route by families taking children to school and has patches which are particularly wet. It was asked if this could be addressed. The Clerk confirmed that this is not a registered footpath but would make enquiries into whether improvements could be made.

Action: Clerk to make enquiries into improving the path

- There was a request for the white lining outside the Legion to be redone to discourage cars from parking close to the entrance and exit.
- Dark lane has evidence of subsidence.

Action: Cllr Townsend to highlight both issues to Somerset Highways.

13 Finance

1. Bank Reconciliation

Clerk to ask Cllr Bell to check the reconciliation prior to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to progress

2. 2nd Quarter budget Review –

The Clerk had circulated 2 reports for the 2nd quarter budget review generated by Scribe the new accounting package showing the actual payments and receipts up to 30th September 2022 along with another which included a forecast for the year end.

The 2nd quarter review was approved.

The Clerk explained that each Councillor would be able to access Scribe to review the information and reports without amending the data. This could be useful in finding a report which best met the Council's needs.

Action: Clerk to inform Councillors how to log on to the Scribe system

3. Review & ratify Finance working party recommendation for Clerks Contract

The finance working party proposed that:

- The clerks contracted hours be increased from 56 hours to 68 hours per month. The additional 5 hours to cover the increased work load and 7 hours a month for holiday pay.
- Agreement has been reached on the rates of pay by the National association of local councils. These are applicable from the 1st April 2022. The Clerks is currently SCP 26 at £16.10 which will increase to £17.10 per hour.
- Back pay to cover the additional hours over the last 8 month should be paid (12 hours at £17.10) Total £1641.60
- The bank standing orders for the clerk's salary and pension contribution to be amended.
- The clerk job description to be updated to include the additional role of playground inspections and water flush at the changing rooms

All Councillors present agreed to the recommendations of the Finance working party.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to speak with Pata Payroll services (recommended by SALC) to calculate the correct amount of tax, national insurance and pension contribution for back pay and future payments and set up the appropriate standing orders.

4. Review & ratify Small Grants working party recommendations for small grant applications
The Small Grants working party considered the 10 applications received and made the following recommendations:

| Group / Club | Description | Amount to Award |
|--|--|------------------------|
| Coleford Knit & Natter Group | For yarn | £75.00 |
| 1st Coleford Scout Group | Water heaters for the bathrooms | £200.00 |
| Coleford Conservation Volunteers | Wildflower plugs for Butterfly Bank | £75.00 |
| Young at Heart | Heating/Hall hire, paint and canvasses, percussion instruments & craft items | £100.00 |
| Huckyduck Carnival Club | Cleaning of portable toilets | £200.00 |
| Coleford Rocks 'CROCKS' * See notes below | Marquee for music day | £500.00 |
| Theatre Group | Lighting costs and costumes | £450.00 |
| Coleford Youth & Community Hub | Double glazing | £500.00 |
| Bishop Henderson School | Resources for children on growing their own food | £200.00 |
| Tuesday afternoon club | To subsidise running costs and trips | £200.00 |
| | Total | £2,500.00 |

All Councillors agreed that the recommendations should stand and the payments made but the cheque for CROCKS should be held by the Parish Council until a 'Coleford Rocks' bank account is set up and it is known that the event will go ahead.

The Clerk to liaise with CROCKS regarding use of the field. If the changing rooms are required then a deposit will need to be paid.

Vote: 9 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to send cheques and liaise with CROCKS

5. Accounts approved for payments:
The following invoices were presented for payment:

| | |
|--|----------|
| HMRC - National Insurance | £ 19.34 |
| V Watts - Clerks Expenses | £ 35.00 |
| Alvian – Nest swing repair | £ 114.00 |
| Nippers Tippers – Bench repair at the Piano shop & Coleford PF | £ 115.00 |

It was agreed that the above payments should be made.

Vote: 9 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

14 Discuss the future of On the Map

It was agreed that Cllr Townsend would speak with Clarissa regarding the current set up and also approach those that have shown an interest in taking on the production to establish if it is possible to keep it running

Action: Cllr Townsend to progress. Clerk to advertise on Facebook for help if required.

15 Consider the grant funding available to create Warm Spaces in Somerset

It was agreed that the clerk in conjunction with Cllr Ham would apply for the grant funding to host warm spaces at the Hub.

Action: Clerk to action

16 Discuss whether to send the book of condolence to MDC to be bound with other parishes from Mendip.

After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would ask Clarissa if the book of condolences could be held at the church.

Action: Clerk to action

17 Update on the Allotments

The working party will meet on Wednesday 16th November at 7pm to consider bids on fencing, fruit trees and layout.

1. Approve and sign the lease - To be carried over to the next meeting
2. Ratify the tenancy agreement - To be carried over to the next meeting

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

3. Allotment tree work – Hillside Trees had provided a report which confirmed that the work on the ash and beech tree at Hillside adjacent to Coleford Playing Field should be completed within 12 months. The clerk will inform the tenant and ensure that quotes are received for the work to be completed within the scheduled period.

Action: Clerk to action

18 Discuss & agree whether to purchase and plant 2 oak trees to mark the Queens Platinum Jubilee

It was agreed that the trees would cost £60 each and each surround could be purchased within budget of £180. Cllr Ham to progress with the order and a date should be agreed for the planting to ensure sufficient time to promote the event.

Vote: 9 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cllr Ham and Clerk to purchase the tree and surround. Agree date and advertise.

19 Consider whether to declare a Climate Emergency and make a plan on how to address it

This will be considered at the December meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

20 Playing Fields and Play Equipment

1. Agree proposal for the renovations of the hardcourt
The Clerk had been asked by MDC Community Grant officer to submit a formal proposal of the changes to the proposed renovations in order to be able to utilize the grant already awarded.
The Clerk asked the Council to consider the following proposal:

Phase 1 – Remove and upgrade fencing. Total cost for Phase 1 £29985+ VAT
Phase 2 – Remove and upgrade the goals. Total cost for Phase 2 £10850 + VAT
Phase 3 – Relining the courts. Total cost for Phase 3 £1206 + VAT
Phase 4 - Purchase new tennis nets. Total cost for Phase 4 £772.56 + VAT

Phase 5 - Purchase remote booking system. Awaiting quotes

After discussion all Councillors agreed that the proposal should be submitted. If successful the £20K grant funding would go towards phase 1 which would dramatically reduce the safety risk identified by ROSPA in this year's inspection.

Vote: 9 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to submit the proposal to MDC

1. Consider quote for the removal of the existing fence

No quotes yet received.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

2. Update on the levelling of the main football pitch at Highbury playing field

A meeting with the representatives of Pennys is scheduled to take place on 11th November at 9.30pm to discuss the levelling of the pitch.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

3. Consider quote to repair the Youth Shelter at Highbury Shelter at Highbury Playing Field.

It was agreed that Cllr Ham will arrange for the shelter to be removed from the field to explore the possibilities of re cladding the structure with rubber matting.

Action: Cllr Ham to action

21 Discuss how to protect items from Coleford Industrial Heritage

The Clerk to register the items highlighted by the resident with South West Heritage and also send a copy to Wessex Water as they have an interest in the drains and the sewer vent pipe

Action: Clerk to complete the registration

22 Meetings to attend or attended

14/11/22 - CPRE AGM – Cllr Townsend attended and gave the following report:

- Planning - members were asked to be vigilant about 'fake news' in applications where environmental benefits in particular were exaggerated. Specific examples quoted were unsubstantiated 'net gains in bio-diversity' and claims that sheep will always graze under solar farms. None of the 40+ members present had ever seen any, The CPRE have a planning consultant, Fletcher Robinson, available to provide support if needed on any application that could harm the environment.
- Enforcement - the lack of Enforcement throughout the county was highlighted.
- Activists - although the CPRE is a campaigning organisation it will not get involved in violent activism as we see at the moment.
- Finger posts - there may be some funding available for restoration. The original grants were based on Hinckley C, there may be wider scope.

11/11/22 @ 9.30am at the Hub - Meeting with Pennys to discuss levelling of the football pitch at Highbury. Cllr Pearce, Townsend, Ham and the Clerk to attend

23 Correspondence

National Allotment Association magazine – passed to Cllr Pearce

Draft publication of supplementary planning – Greenspace. – To be discussed at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

24 Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion

There were none

25 Date of Next Meetings:

23rd November 2022 @ 7pm for Planning meeting

14th December 2022 @ 7pm for Parish Council meeting

The meeting finished approx. 10.30hrs