

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 19th March 2025

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Banks, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Moulding, Paterson and Pearce.
Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke also attended.

In attendance 2 member of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 Mr and Mrs Crutchley attended the meeting and outlined their wish to apply for planning permission in the field adjacent to their current home in Newbury. The Council agreed that support couldn't be given until the plans were produced as any decision would need to be based on material planning reasons.
- 1.2 It was noted that the street lights (numbered 1 and 2) at the top of Church Street are still not working.
- 1.3 It was reported that the road layout at the bottom of Lawrence Road needed to be reviewed. Cars are not stopping as they leave Roman Way and progress round the bend on to Lawrence Road, which has resulted in a near miss. It was asked if a white line could be added to remind those leaving Roman Way that they need to stop.

Action: Cllr Ham to raise this with Somerset Highways Engineer Sara Davies and Cllr Townsend to raise with Charlie Higgins.

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

Cllr Allen, Bell, Sword, Townsend and PCSO Will Mortimer sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

Cllr Pearce declared an interest in Agenda item 8.2

4. Approve the minutes from the meetings held on the 12th and 26th February 2025

The Clerk had circulated the draft minutes prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Paterson and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and should be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

5. Actions arising from the minutes

All actions were completed or were dealt with as agenda items during the meeting.

6. Co-option of Councillors

There were no applicants to consider. There are currently 2 vacancies which the Clerk and Councillors will promote.

Action: Clerk to continue to advertise the vacancies.

7. Reports

7.1 Somerset Council

Somerset Councillor Philip Ham reported:

The Somerset budget has been agreed for 2025/26. This resulted in the Council tax being increased by 7.5% which is the 6th highest rise in the country. A £50 million capitalisation agreement and selling of assets to provide everyday spending was also approved. The Budget gap forecast is even bigger next year standing at £110 million.

Planning – New rules around policies for housing has resulted in Somerset Council taking legal opinion before fighting appeals. If the advice is poor or difficult they will not fight appeals, which is what happened at the Kilmersdon / White Post development.

Cllr Ham tried to get an appointment with the planning officer dealing with the Rainer appeal but it is hoped this will happen in the next week.

LCN's are not working as planned. Lots of talk, no outcomes and little action. Next meeting planned for 28/04/25 but still no agenda agreed.

Cllr Ham confirmed he had recently met with Somerset Highways Engineer Sara Davies. They are currently pushing hard for 30mph in Vobster, which is currently being scrutinized for implementation as well as rumble strips at Newbury School, streetlighting in village and the bridge at the bottom of the village as well as many other issues throughout the division.

On the 12th March, Cllr Ham attended 3 quarry meetings.

- Halecombe Quarry confirmed that production was currently down by 20%. The Community Fund awarded approx. £4,500 during this round of funding.
- Wainwrights are expecting the planning permission decision in September and have offered to litter pick Charmborough Lane.
- Torr have rebranded and are now named Holcan rather than Aggregate Industries.

Somerset has been awarded £9 million to deal with the phosphate problem. Kings Council opinion is that Natural England have over reacted to the issue which has already shown signs of the water improving. New building in these areas have halted until things improved or Phosphate Credits are obtained. (Approx £35K per credit). This is holding up the building of 18,000 houses with planning permission.

Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke added:

- Consultation on parking will be coming soon.
- Information on surface dressing etc has been shared.

7.2 PCSO

The report for March showed that there were 2 crimes for Coleford. PCSO Will Mortimer raised some concern regarding anti-social behaviour at Highbury Playing Field.

Action: Clerk to liaise with PCSO to discuss and find resolution

7.3 Climate Action Group

A volunteer from the group has been attending Mendip Country Practice on Wednesday morning as an advisor on how to save energy which included giving out electric blankets, slow cookers etc but this has now come to an end.

7.4 Update on the Emergency planning meeting

Cllr Moulding attended the meeting and was keen to progress with a plan. It was agreed that the Clerk would share the electronic copy for all Councillors to consider prior to the next meeting when this will be covered in more detail.

Action: Clerk to share. Agenda item for next meeting.

7.5 Any other Councillor reports

The Clerk had prepared a report for Coleford and Holcombe Community Magazine regarding the imminent leveling of the Highbury Playing Field which explained that residents know that this is going to happen soon.

Action: Clerk to submit to CHCM

8. Planning Applications

8.1 2025/0280/FUL - Change of use from 1-bedroom annexe to 1-bedroom holiday let accommodation. Tan Farm, Common Lane, Holcombe

Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Moulding that the application be recommended for approval subject to clarification on the status of the second access which has been created but not shown on the planning application.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention (Somerset Councillor)

Action: Clerk to notify the planning department

8.2 2025/0419/CLP - Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use to demonstrate that planning reference 2022/2368/FUL has lawfully commenced and the development approved can be completed at any time. Lynden House, Common Lane, Holcombe

This was provided by Somerset Planning Office for information only

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention (Somerset Councillor)

9. Planning updates

9.1 Consider response to the Appeal APP/E3335/W/25/3358746 - 2024/0163/OUT - Land at Anchor Road, Coleford

It is hoped that a meeting will take place with the planning officer next week to discuss the strategy for the appeal. After discussion it was agreed that the objections would be submitted to the planning inspectorate by the 25th March.

Action: Report to be drafted and submitted by the council by 25/03/25

9.2 Review previous applications

Agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Item for April meeting

10. Highways including:

10.1 Councillor update

Cllr Townsend did not attend but reported that all highway and lighting items reported as actioned and the dropped drains have been sorted on Charlton Road.

It is disappointing that there is still no date for LCN Highways Working Group meeting but a date has been set to meet with Charlie Higgins on the 3rd April.

Action: Cllrs were encouraged to report points which needed to be highlighted

10.2 Report of any new issues

Drains outside Hippys Farm need cleaning and outside the Kings Head

Action: Cllr Townsend to report

11. Update on the Coleford Menshed

The meeting took place on 01/03/25 with the Hub full of people interested to hear about the Sheds. Partick Abrahams an ambassador from Men's Shed attended and gave a presentation on the concept of the shed and what it can bring to the community and answered questions. 16 people completed a

questionnaire to confirm their interest in setting up a shed and advising their areas of interest. Refreshments were provided which were well received.

The meeting had demonstrated that there was good interest in a community shed and it was agreed that the Parish Council should continue to facilitate setting up the men's shed as a community asset to be run and managed by Shedder completely separate from the Parish Council.

The next stage is to set up a steering group and to have it in place by end April 25. This group would work through the set up processes with the help and guidance of the Men's Sheds Association.

Action: Cllr Pearce to action

12. Discuss and agree actions for Coleford Allotments

The updated rules of the Allotment were agreed and will be shared with the allotment holders.

The extra water tanks are to be installed soon.

It was agreed that the boundary fencing which was damaged by the fallen tree needs a temporary fix whilst we are waiting for Vobster Quay to repair.

Action: PH and VW to source Heras fencing and fit.

13. Consider request for contribution towards fence repair at village allotment plot

It was agreed that no contribution would be made. A request would be made for the fallen timber to be moved from the playing field as a matter of urgency

Vote 7 for. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to progress

14. Discuss and consider the quote from Somerset Council for bin emptying

Agenda item for the next meeting

Action: Clerk to share locations of bins before meeting

15. Finance

14.1 Agree bank reconciliation

To be checked at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

14.2 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts - Clerks Expenses (Inc repayment to N Harding)	£37.73
HMRC – National Insurance & Tax due	£120.06
PATA Payroll services	£ 48.46
Geeking IT Simple – Anti-virus protection	£ 43.56
Pic Rights UK Ltd – Copyright charge	£150.00
RBL shop – Woman at War statue	£200.00
Coleford Hub - Hall hire	£666.00

It was proposed by Cllr Allen and seconded by Cllr Banks that the payments should be made. The cheques were signed by Cllr Ham, Townsend & Banks.

Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

16. Meetings to attend / attended

12/03/25 Torr, Halecombe & Wainwrights quarry meetings attended by PH & PB

03/03/25 Shepton LCN attended by CP

14/03/25 – Pennys attended by CP/PH/VW

26/02/25 Emergency Planning meeting attended by MM

21/03/25 CCS Green Wedmore Showcase 11-2pm

Sunday 23/03/25 @ 10am – Village Litter pick, meeting at Highbury Playing Field

25/03/25 @ 10am via Teams meeting for Better Buses for Somerset. Cllr Moulding to attend

26/-03/25 6pm – 7.30pm CCS Community Solution Seekers

26/03/25 @ 7pm Annual Parish Meeting

17. Correspondence

15/03/25 – West Monkton Parish Council – Certificate for the Poppy of Honour

14/03/25 – Keep Britian Tidy – Ordered 50 Great British Spring Clean bags

18. Date of Next Meetings:

23rd March 2025 Annual Litter Pick @ 10am – Location to be confirmed

26th March 2025 Annual Meeting of the Parish & Planning meeting

9th April 2025 Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.52hrs