

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 8th April 2026

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman) Banks, Evans, Fisher, Palmer, Paterson, Pearce, Swords and Townsend

In attendance 1 member of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 Thanks were expressed to Pennys for the detailed response given to questions raised on Facebook regarding where the soil was being imported from.
- 1.2 It was asked why there a digger is completing extensive work on land directly in front of a house on Highbury Street. Cllr Ham said that he believed that a mineshaft has dropped and the Coal Board are trying to rectify the issues.
- 1.3 It was noted that the benches at Preachers View have rotted and need replacing.

Action: Coleford Shedders to investigate & provide quote for materials if they are happy to complete the work. Agenda item for next meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Allen, Bell and Moulding.

3. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

There were none.

4. Approve the minutes from the meetings held on 11th and 25th March 2026

The draft minutes from both meetings had been shared and displayed on the website. It was agreed that both sets accurately reflected the meetings and should be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

5. Actions arising from the minutes

All actions had been completed or would be discussed as an agenda item during the meeting.

6. Reports from:

6.1 Somerset Council – The monthly report had not yet been received but would be added to the website once received. Cllr Ham reported that:

- He had made an official complaint to the CEO of Somerset Council in reference to how Full Council meeting was conducted in early March ref Abuse, Debate curtailed, Bias opinions , and conducted outside the rules of the Constitution. Receipt has been acknowledged but he awaits a reply.
- The two applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites (The Pines , Gypsy Lane, Frome and at Tytherington, Frome) were both refused at the planning board.
- The planning application for 1700 houses at Selwood Garden has been approved.

- Fusion Leisure who run leisure centres in Frome, Wells, Shepton Mallet, Glastonbury and Street have gone in to administration. All facilities will continue to run as normal for the next three months after professional services company S&W was appointed as administrator to run Fusion on a temporary basis. Somerset Council is working towards getting a new operator in place as soon as possible.

6.2 PCSO – The report had been circulated to all Councillors and will be available to view as a report on the website. There were:

- 2 x Arson & Criminal Damage
- 1 x Non-Recordable
- 1 x Sexual Offence
- 2 x Violence Against a Person

Action: Clerk to ask the PCSO if the ratio of crime is in line with other parishes.

6.3 Climate Action Group – Cllr Ham to investigate the two Climate Groups that are apparently running in Coleford. The Coleford Climate Action (independent) and the Coleford Climate Group (which apparently is linked to the Council.) Report back at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Hame to investigate the Climate Group

6.4 Coleford Shedders inc:

6.4.1 Approve costs for renovation on telephone box - It was agreed that that the cost of the paint to renovate the phone box - £94.98 would be covered by the Parish Council.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cllr Palmer to share the bank details so that the payment can be made in order for the paint to be purchased.

6.4.2 Consider request for help to install electric into the shed @ the Hub - A quote had been received to install electricity into the sheds outside the Hub. Cllr Palmer asked whether the Council might consider helping to fund as there had been an indication that funds would be available to help with the setting up of the Menshed and to date only £150 has been received.

Cllr Ham said that this should be considered at the next meeting after further quotes had been obtained and discussion with the Hub committee.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

7. **Planning Applications**

There were none.

8. **Planning updates**

There were none.

9. **Consider whether a further response is required regarding the Freedom of information request**

After discussion it was agreed that a draft response would be circulated to all Councillors for consideration.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

10. **Consider applying to extend the Asset of Community Value certificate on the Coleford British Legion which is due to expire June 2026**

Cllr Ham proposed that an extension to the Asset of Community Value certificate should be sought which was agreed by all Councillors.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cllr Ham to speak with Ian Mundy of Somerset Council to establish what would be involved. Agenda item for the May meeting.

11. **Consider Mells PC request for funding from the Gladman & Rainier developments.**
After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would respond to say that Coleford Parish Council has not been promised funds as a result of the developments but would keep this in mind if this changed in the future.

Action: Clerk to respond to Mells PC

12. **Highways including:**

12.1 Councillor update – Cllr Townsend provided the following report:

Defect Items reported:

- Charmborough Lane, again - priority requested to repair potholes already reported between Hill Farm and Lipyeate House
- Vobster/Stockhill, again - previously reported pothole worse now
- Mendip Vale - loose kerbstones opposite no's 87 and 97
- Springers Hill - pothole at top
- Ham - line of potholes along utility trench.
- Charlton Rd to Charmborough Lane potholes on junction
- Wells - pothole outside Spar/Post Office on Tucker St
- Farley Dell to Anchor Rd junction - line of potholes

Also:

- Graffiti opposite Lipyeate bus stop obliterated after reporting to police and Highways
- Anchor Rd - successfully persuaded utility to avoid full closure of
- Anchor Rd with dangerous diversion via Church St, High St, Springers Hill and install temporary traffic lights.

12.2 Report of any new issues – There were no new issues raised.

12.3 Consider purchase of a speed indicator device for use at Stockhill and Lipyeate – The Clerk presented a quote for Elan Evolis Solar Powered Speed Indicator Device for £2,589.99 + VAT however was disappointed that Somerset Highways had ignored the request to approve locations at both Stockhill and Lipyeate to slow traffic as they enter the village. After considering the budget, Cllr Ham proposed that 2 devices should be purchased which was seconded by Cllr Palmer. It was however agreed that no purchase would be made until Somerset Highways had confirmed agreed locations.

Action: Cllr Ham to press Somerset Highways for the locations to be agreed as a matter of urgency

13 **Finance**

13.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation – Clerk to ask Cllr Bell to approve before the next meeting

13.2 Consider year end accounts 2025/26 – The Clerk had shared the year end figures which showed the headlines are:

Budget Receipts:	£87,807.00
Actual Receipts:	£97,214.26
Difference:	£ 9,407.26 more than budgeted
Budget Payments:	£77,786.31
Actual Payments:	£69,626.07
Difference:	£ 8,160.24 less than budgeted

It was always the Councils intention to replenish the reserves during the year. The Clerk suggested that the Council should consider carrying forward the following amounts as earmarked reserves:

Line 30.	Prof fees - Solicitor fees for playing field clarification	£ 715.00
Line 32.	Capital Improvements – Notice boards	£ 500.00
Line 58.	Highways – Speed Indicator Device	£1,000.00
Line 42.	Capital project – Hard Court Goal /Hoops	£1,000.00
	Total	£3,215.00

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Townsend that the year-end accounts should be approved and the amounts specified as earmarked reserves be carried forward to the new financial year.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to ensure amounts are carried forward and that the Chair signs the accounts as agreed.

- 13.3 Arrange Assertion 10 training session for Councillors – It was agreed that training will be conducted by Cllr John Fisher for all Councillors as part of the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

- 13.4 Agree IT Policy and Personal Use Policy – It was agreed that this would be carried over to the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

- 13.5 Consider quote from Somerset Council for emptying bins for 2026/27 – Somerset Council had provided a quote of £3650.40 for emptying 6 Litter bins & 3 dog bins weekly @ £6.50 per bin per empty for the year 2026/27. It was agreed that there was no option other than to accept the quote.

Action: Clerk to sign on behalf of the Council and submit

- 13.6 Consider and agree quotes for Parish Council Noticeboards – The Clerk presented 2 quotes for notice boards. One wall mounted noticeboard to be located at the Hub to replace the current board at Underhill. The second to replace the current board outside the Piano shop with a new board fixed on posts with a small roof to help protect from the elements, located at the entrance to the new Co-op.

The Clerk highlighted that the current one at Underhill had been repaired but the original posts were rotting and should be replaced before the end of the year. After discussion it was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

- 13.7 Consider quote for installing the 2 x Topsy bins - The Clerk had struggled to obtain quotes to install the 2 new topsy bins for the bottom of Beacon View and the back of Mendip Vale but had received one quote for £317.90 for the installation of both including materials. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Palmer and seconded by Cllr Banks that the quote should be accepted.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to instruct the contractor

- 13.8 Accounts approved for payments - The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts – Expenses	£ 65.87
HMRC	£194.37
SALC & NALC Annual Affiliation fee	£989.34
CPRE Annual membership fee	£ 36.00

It was agreed that all payments should be approved.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to set up payments to be authorized online by 2 signatories

13.9 Notification of monthly payments made by standing order - The following payments are made by monthly standing order:

V Watts – Salary	£1,181.64
Somerset Council – Clerk Pension	£ 365.23
LSJ Gardening services – Grass Cutting	£1,527.48
EDF – Electricity at the Changing Rooms	£ 33.04

14 **Highbury Playing Fields Charity**

14.1 Update on leveling of the playing field – The Clerk confirmed that the fence is up and the stripping of the top soil had commenced. Penny’s representatives were disappointed that an amount of glass had been found, which meant that it could not be used for reinstatement as topsoil at the end of the levelling process. A quote will be sought to provide sufficient top soil for completion, although it is hoped that the glass has only been found in a small area of the field meaning that minimal top soil would need to be purchased, if any.

Action: An update on this will be sought for the next meeting.

The creation of a road into the field is underway which will help to reduce the amount of mud carried out onto the road (which would be cleaned with a road sweeper if needed). Fortnightly meetings will be held with Pennys which will be shared on social media and the website. Any issues, complaints or questions should be directed to Wayne Frapple on 07355 607171 or Cllr Matthew Allen on 07814 934618

14.2 Consider and approve quote for legal fees in relationship to PC assets on the playing field

Clarity is required on ownership of assets on the Highbury playing field and how the land should be registered with Land Registry. The cost of this work completed by a solicitor from Stone King, with good knowledge of Charity Law is likely to be in the region of £1,750.00 - £2,000.00. It was proposed by Cllr Banks and seconded by Cllr Paterson that the quote should be accepted and the work completed.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to instruct the solicitors to complete the work.

15 **Update on Community Car Scheme**

A Parishioner attended the meeting held on the 10th March on behalf of the Parish Council and reported back as follows:

- Somerset has no money spare to subsidise a village car share scheme. However, there is a discretionary concessionary fares scheme. Something like, people who have a bus pass only pay a small amount and then Somerset pay the difference.
- Go to ‘Think Travel’ website for lots of suggestions for travel. But not taxis.
- Watchet[I think] have purchased their own electric car and is used by volunteer drivers.
- Mendip Community Transport also have about twenty hospital drivers, for single person trips.
- Mid Somerset Car Share Partnership have a car share Joint Insurance Policy, and we could be added to that scheme.
- Nick Margison, a Somerset employee could possibly come to Coleford to talk to us about a car share scheme.
- Nick thinks that a car share scheme is vital as people who can’t afford a taxi will miss hospital appointments. More locally, will miss village events and activities, like Armchair aerobics, Talking Café, Knit and Natter. Which are good for mental health.

It was suggested that the Parish Council should invite Nick Margison to talk with Coleford Parish Council, Holcombe Parish Council, Mendip Country Practice, and any others to initially set up a scheme to get people to the surgery. This possibly could then expand to taking people to the bus stop, shop, church etc. Could potentially be done on Zoom.

The Clerk had already thanked the volunteer for attending and reporting back. It was agreed that the Clerk would make contact with Nick Margison with a view to setting a date for a meeting.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting with Nick Margison to discuss setting up a scheme

16 Meetings to attend / attended
14/04/26 from 2pm til 4pm LCN Highways meeting.

17 Correspondence
There was none

18 Date of Next Meetings:
22nd April 2026 Planning meeting

It was agreed that the Parish Council meeting planned for 13th May 2026 would be bought forward to take place on Wednesday the 6th May 2026.

The meeting ended at 21.19hrs