

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 26th August 2026

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman), Bell, Evans, Fisher, Palmer, Pearce and Swords

In attendance 4 members of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 A resident reported that an articulated tanker from Flogas had caused issues in the village and on Charmborough Lane last week. The Chair confirmed that this had already been raised with the company involved who had confirmed that they would investigate why it was in the village and whether alternative arrangements could be considered for future deliveries in the area.
- 1.2 A resident had requested that the Council recommend a pedestrian crossing be installed at the Stockhill end of the village. The Chair had highlighted that a crossing had formed part of the planning application for the Alford's Ridge development which was never pursued by Mendip Planning department. He agreed that he would address this with Somerset Highways.

Action: Cllr Ham to request that Somerset Highways give this consideration.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Allen, Banks, Townsend and Moulding which were accepted by the Chair. Cllr Douglas-Burke did not attend.

3. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

Cllr Ham declared an interest in agenda item 9.1 & 9.2.

4. Planning Applications

- 4.1 2026/1507/FUL - Erection of two, three-bedroom chalet bungalows at Land At 369508 149232 & 369508 149232, Stockhill Court Coleford

Cllrs had considered the plans prior to the meeting. The applicant attended and outlined that he had purchased the land in 2024, which had been marketed as having development potential. He is not a speculative developer but intends to build 2 x high-quality homes for himself and his parents. The land was sold with a legal agreement for vehicular access from Somerset Council. He acknowledges resident concerns but emphasized the access arrangement is legally binding and would apply to any purchaser. The least disruptive access route has been agreed and is detailed within the application. An earlier scheme was considered acceptable by the planning department in principle but refused on three main grounds:

- Insufficient detail on the legal parking agreement (now resolved).
- Excessive built footprint relative to plot size (footprint now significantly reduced to increase amenity space and reduce visual/overshadowing impact).
- Design and height concerns (gable dormers removed; ridge height reduced by 0.5m; design now more in keeping with neighbouring bungalows; rooms placed within loft space to maximize usable area).

He also addressed comments raised at the time by the parish and resident namely:

- Ground settlement: Will be monitored and controlled through building regulations and building control.
- Preference for bungalows: Fully explored but found unviable due to plot constraints and required parking lengths; resulting floorplans would be cramped and unsuitable for full-time living. Notes that the proposed homes are small but functional, and more viable than true single-storey bungalows on the same plots.
- Coleford has extensive green space with a large playing field nearby
- The land lies within the development boundary of Coleford, which is a primary village where development is favoured.

The applicant said that the development would provide two reasonably priced three-bedroom homes, designed to fit unobtrusively into the existing street scene. They would offer suitable living amenities for families facing similar housing challenges with minimal harm to the area.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the application be refused for the following reasons:

1. The design basis statement advises that the drainage strategy relies on soakaways to be constructed for the disposal of surface water but there is no evidence given that the ground condition is suitable. Indeed, local knowledge suggests that the ground conditions are unsuitable. Furthermore, it is noted that the proposed soakaways are outside of the plot boundaries on the road side which may well affect their viability. The feasibility of the drainage strategy is questionable and should be investigated in detail as part of the planning process and not left as a building control issue.
2. Over development of the plot.
3. Proposed buildings are over bearing.
4. Safety concerns over reversing out from the parking spaces provided.
5. The installation of dropped kerbs will impact on residents by reducing the number of parking bays available, which is already inadequate.
6. Loss of green landscape when entering the village.

Vote: 3 For, 2 Against and 2 Abstention (1 Somerset Councillor)

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending the meeting.

Action: Clerk to inform the Planning Officer

- 4.2 2026/1584/HSE - Proposed single storey rear/side extension 51 Mendip Vale Coleford
Cllrs had considered the plans prior to the meeting. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the application be recommended for approval as there were no planning reasons to object.

Vote: 3 For, 2 Against and 2 Abstention (1 Somerset Councillor)

Action: Clerk to inform the Planning Officer

- 4.3 2026/1608/TPO – T1 Mature Ash – Reduce tree, Early signs of Ash Die Back. Remove deadwood. 14 Preachers Vale, Coleford.
Provided for notification only.

5. **Discuss whether to apply for Tree Preservation Orders on 4 x Oak trees at Lipyeate**
A member of the public attended the meeting to request that the Parish Council apply for tree preservation orders on 5 oak trees in total which borders the Rainier site at Lipyeate. It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Bell that the Council would apply for a tree preservation order for the 5 trees. The Clerk to complete the application form which will be supported with photographs and the location of the trees plotted on a map.

Action: Clerk to complete the application.

6. Consider location for a community fridge

The Food Store committee are keen to explore the area next to the notice board outside the piano shop or in the Coleford Legion car park near to the Gospel Hall. Several other locations were discussed and it was agreed that further discussions were needed with land owners before this could be progressed.

Action: Agenda item for September meeting

7 Consider hosting a warm space during the winter 2026/27

After discussion it was agreed that the current groups which are already set up and running within the village would be approached to establish if they would be prepared to welcome people over the winter as a warm space if needed.

Action: Clerk to discuss with group leaders.

8 Discuss marking the anniversary of ‘2027 - One Hundred Years since Coal Mining’

A member of the community had written to the Council to highlight that 2027 was the 100th anniversary since coal mining in Coleford. They had thought that it might be something that Coleford would like to commemorate and wondered whether the people who run things locally might like to work a coal mining or industrial history theme into their plans for 2027. Here are some ideas that people might like to consider:

- A photography category for mining or industrial history at the Coleford Flower and Craft Show
- A craft category for a coal mine model at the show
- Another one of the celebrated slide shows at the Legion
- Talks on mining at the Tuesday Club and other local meetings, or visits to the excellent Radstock Museum
- A spoken memories event, perhaps at the Hub, perhaps recorded or filmed, and perhaps worked into a Cafe day. Maybe people could bring along mining memorabilia.
- A photographic and/or art exhibition.
- A project on mining at the school and/or by the scouts
- A led walk or two along the remains of the canal and to the pit sites.
- A themed night at the Acoustic Club.

This information would be shared in the next edition of the Parish Magazine. Councillors present thought this was a good idea and would discuss with groups that they were directly involved with. Cllr Palmer agreed to notify Bishop Henderson

Action: Cllrs to spread the word to help mark the occasion.

9 Highbury Playing Fields

- 9.1 Review and agree Agronomist for maintenance plan to satisfy planning conditions –It was noted that Pennys would be required to provide a report on the design at completion at which point the agronomist would then oversee proceedings for establishing the seed. The Clerk explained that she had tried to engage with 5 different agronomists but had only received quotes from 2. The most favorable quoted £600 for the first report advising on requirements to achieve best seed bed and sowing. Advice for subsequent years would be £100 for a visit to inspect the pitch and give recommendations with soil samples at an additional £20 per sample. Any additional fertilizer, weed or pest control products to be priced as required.

Quotes for seed were discussed which would be in the region of £1050 – no VAT payable.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Swords that the quote from the Agronomist Brett Pointing would be accepted which included the sourcing appropriate seed.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

Cllr Ham had declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion or vote

Action: Clerk to inform the Agronomist

- 9.2 Review and agree Contractor for preparation and seeding the pitch - The Clerk had sought quotes from 6 contractors to complete the work on the pitch but only received quotes from 2. The quotes covered the following work:

Subsoiling
Power harrowing
Rolling

Drilling in several directions
Fertilizer application
Transportation to and from the site

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Swords that the quote from Nick Ham Services of £3550 would be accepted.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

Cllr Ham had declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion or vote

Action: Clerk to inform the Contractor

- 9.3 Update on discussions with Stone King on playing field charity – The Charity Trustees and Parish Council working party for the Playing Field attended a meeting to consider the information obtained from the solicitors regarding the conveyance documents. Clarification was required on several points which would be dealt with by email and brought back to the September Parish Council meeting. The solicitor also highlighted that the individual Councillors had incorrectly been named on the Charity Commission website as the trustees when it should be the Parish Council as the sole corporate trustee. Following the meeting, the amendment to the Charity Commission website was completed by the Clerk as agreed at the meeting.

Action: Clerk to raise the questions with the solicitors. Agenda item for the next

- 9.4 Discuss proposed upgrades to the changing rooms
Information had been provided by the football club about the improvements they want to complete at the changing rooms. This included quotes but they had not been received until just prior to the meeting so had been circulated to all Councillors. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next meeting.

Action: Circulate the information to all Councillors. Agenda item for September meeting

10 Date of Next Meetings:

9th September 2026

Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.05hrs