

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB

Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council

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Newsletter for August 2022

Planning Applications

2022/097/FUL – Change of use of existing stone barns into three holiday let units (Retrospective). Upper Vobster Farm, Upper Vobster Road, Vobster, Radstock, BA3 5SA

All Councillors had considered the planning application prior to the meeting. It was noted that the 2012 application was refused on the grounds of highways but was successful on appeal.

There were 3 main areas of concerns:



1. Highways – The access from Upper Vobster onto the main Vobster, Babington and Mells junction doesn't offer the required visibility.
2. The scale of the development of lettings is dominating the local community. Of the 30 properties in Upper Vobster 12 are now lettings controlled by the applicant, which equates to 40%.
3. There was a query over whether the main farmhouse building was a listed building, which could impact on the application.

Coleford Parish Council recommended that the application be refused for the above reasons.

2022/1528/HSE - Erection of single storey side extension either side of property.

Thornlea Highbury Street Coleford

Coleford Parish Council recommended that the application be approved providing the fence is no higher than 1m.

2022/1207/FUL - Erection of 1no. dwellinghouse – Amended plans

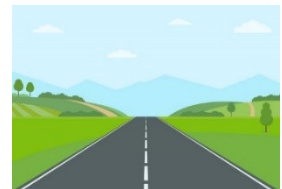
Land At 368716 149115 Church Street, Coleford

Coleford Parish Council recommended that the application should be approved.

Highways:

The dip in the pavement outside Colebury House had been reported and repaired. It was noted that the Highways team had marked up areas for repairs on Brewery Lane by Dark Lane. Stoke Bottom is currently closed for drainage and repair work.

Drainage work is planned just down from Cherry Gardens Farm, which will entail major diversions, but Charmborough Lane has not been utilised, as with 2 other recent closures.



Cllr Ham said that he had met with Sara Davis of Somerset Highways where they discussed the following issues:

1. White lining. Apparently can only be redone when it is 80% worn.
2. Work to the Whatley & Halecombe Quarry routes. There is a legal dispute over Whatley Road and Sara Davis confirmed that they wouldn't white line until the surface has been repaired.
3. Rumble strips have been agreed at Newbury outside the school.
4. HGV restriction signage to be moved from Luckington Farm to Luckington Cross on Dark Lane.
5. 'Except for Access' HGV signs for Charity Lane, Hoares Lane at Kilmersdon and Luckington / Cherry Gardens Lane.
6. There was a conversation about the pending road closures at Stoke St Michael and how the many HGV's which regularly pass will be able to divert. Nothing has been decided as yet but it may be possible to agree a one-way system for HGVs to enable the traffic to kept flowing freely.

7. Martin Ford of Somerset Council will be asked to write to all the Somerset farmers to ask them to cut the hedges hard around the road signs to prevent them from becoming obscured later in the growing season.
8. There was discussion around the slowing of traffic on Church Street. As the Hub is used as a school, youth club and the scouts meet at the hall opposite, it is possible that a 20mph zone and warning signs could be implemented. Sara Davis will give this consideration.
9. As yet there is no consent from the Avon and Somerset Police to approve the Auto speed watch system.

The Clerk will chase up for the overhanging branch at the bus stop on Highbury Street to be removed.

Wildflowers at the pump track

A knowledgeable member of the public had put forward several points for consideration on why the pump track site was appropriate for wildflowers and how it could be further improved. They did not consider Beacon View as a suitable location for wildflowers.



The annual safety report stated that the banks needed to be strimmed to reduce overhanging brambles and nettles to make it a safer place for young people to ride. After discussion it was agreed that the banks would be strimmed regularly as part of the ongoing ground maintenance from now until the Spring when it would be further reviewed.

Parish Council website and Councilor email addresses

The Clerk had presented quotes from 3 website/email providers. After deliberation it was agreed that Western Web should provide a new website and email facility for the Council based on the following quote. £645 for design, build and migration. £80 for website hosting per year. £150 per year for hosting all email accounts per year. £30 to set up the mailbox. Western Web confirmed that the website would be completed by October.

Date of Next Meetings:

14th September 2022 – Parish Council meeting

28th September 2022 – Planning meeting



If you have any issues that you would like to bring to the Parish Council's attention please contact the Clerk on 01749 880428 or email clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com Check out the website www.colefordsomerset.info

Philip Ham

Somerset County Council

Cllr Ham gave the following update:



Council Tax consultation: A consultation on council tax support for the new unitary Somerset Council has been launched. This is the first major policy consultation for the new council and it proposes that the lowest households across Somerset get 100% council tax relief. This is a substantial increase as maximum relief is set at around 80% in most parts of the County. The proposed changes would harmonise support for working age people on low incomes and would come in to effect on 1st April 2023 with the creation of the Council. The consultation runs until the 19th September and can be found at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SomersetCTRLIVE

Wheelchair and community equipment: SCC and NHS Somerset are this month launching a new Community Equipment and Wheelchair service to help people to live more independently. The new service will loan a range of equipment for as long as they need it. The service will include delivery and fitting, servicing, collection, and recycling. More information is available at www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/equipment-to-help-you

Tackling violence against women and girls: SCC and North Somerset Councils have secured an additional £317,674 from the Home Office Safer Streets fund to continue to make public spaces and streets safer for women and girls. This will allow the councils to focus on antisocial behaviour concerns that contribute to the fear of violence against women and girls by targeting resources at four locations – Taunton, Bridgwater, Weston Super Mare and Yeovil.

Ecological Emergency: SCC has voted to put additional focus into protecting Somerset's natural environment and biodiversity by declaring an Ecological Emergency. The Council previously declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and has since worked with Somerset's 4 District Councils and other partners to develop the Somerset Climate emergency strategy. The ecological emergency work will complement the existing Climate Emergency 'Natural Environment' actions with a renewed focus on land management, biodiversity and natural habitats.

Somerset Business Climate Summit: This will take place at Queens College in Taunton on the 21st September between 10am and 1pm. The summit will highlight best practice and raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges for businesses as we shift towards a low carbon economy. Businesses were encouraged to examine their current business models and make pledges to reduce carbon footprints. Details can be found at: www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency/climate-emergency/businesses/climate-summit/

Unitary update

Cllr Ham chaired the meeting held at Doultong where there was a discussion around Local Community Networks (LCN's). The boundary maps are still not available but should be out soon. There will then be a period of consultation and approval should take place in November. It has been rumoured that Licensing and Planning will be dealt with by the LCN's.

Mendip District Council

Cllr Townsend and Ham provided the following report:

The Mendip Audit Committee met on the 3rd August and finally agreed the sign off of the Accounts for the Year Ending March 2021.



The Planning Board on 17th August will debate the plan for the redevelopment of Saxonvale in the centre of Frome. This is in opposition to the plan submitted by Mendip and their partner Acorn following Mendip District Councils purchase of the site and this has already been approved by the Board. Mayday Saxonvale who has submitted the new plan claims to be a not-for-profit organisation and apparently have considerable local support. However, the new applicants do not own the site and it does not offer the quantum of housing required by the LPP2 – 182 as opposed to 250 but it does incorporate a new primary school hence the lower number.

At Cabinet on 8th August it was agreed to defend the Judicial Review raised by Norton St Philip against the legality of the Local Plan Part 2 and its allocation of an extra 505 dwellings in the north east of the district.