

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council
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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 12th July 2023

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Banks, Barrett, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Moulding and Pearce

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

1. Public Forum

1. The hedges either side of the entrance to the footpath which leads from Bishop Henderson School to the pedestrian crossing have become overgrown, which is impeding the visibility. Clerk to ask the owners of the hedge to cut it back as a matter of urgency.

Action: Clerk to write to landowners

2. A request has been received asking if the Parish Council can tidy the area outside the piano shop behind the bench and the noticeboard.

Action: Clerk to seek quotes

3. Complaints have been received regarding parking on the grass outside of the properties located at Goodeaves and Stockhill. This has impacted on grass cutting.

Action: Clerk to write to Aster and ask that they contact all residents to request that they stop parking on the grass

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Allen, Bell, Drescher, Townsend, Paterson, West and Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

Cllr Pearce and Ham declared an interest in agenda item 13.3 payments.

4. Agree the minutes

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 14th and 28th June 2023 had been circulated to all Councilors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that they accurately reflected the meetings and should be approved.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 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 during the meeting 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

- Now that a speed watch group has formed the parish is eligible to apply for funding from Avon and Somerset Police towards a speed indicator device (SID). The Clerk will complete the application.

Action: Clerk to apply for SID funding

- Consider asking residents to report accidents to the council to help compile evidence of accidents to fight future development
It was agreed that the Clerk would ask residents via social media to report any accidents which they had encountered whilst driving on the roads within Coleford

Action: Clerk to promote via social media and CHCM

- The Clerk had received information from Land Registry which showed the registered plots, that lie adjacent to the wall which runs along the footpath behind the Kings Head public house. Although part of the wall has been repaired the next section also requires work.

Action: Cllr Evans to inspect the wall and if there still poses so risk, establish the address for the person who owns the wall.

- It appears that the oil spill in the lower part of the village is still an issue. A local resident thought they may know where the source was coming from and would pass on details to the clerk so that this information could be given to the Environment Agency.

Action: Clerk to progress

- Consider and select quotes for fencing at the hard courts, Highbury Playing Field
Two quotes had been received. After consideration it was agreed that a visit to see samples of the fencing to be purchased prior to making a decision. Cllrs Townsend and Pearce agreed to visit sites to see the standard of the material in question

***Action: Clerk to establish where local samples can be seen & arrange visit.
Agenda item for next meeting***

6. Planning Applications

There were none.

7. Planning updates including enforcement issues

The Clerk had contacted Enforcement to highlight that work had started at Old Meadow House, Anchor Road prior to the creation of the improved visibility splay. Enforcement made contact with the contractors and the work has since been completed.

8. Reports

1. PCSO – No report had been received.

Action: Clerk to contact PCSO to establish if PACT meetings are happening

2. Somerset Council – Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke attended the meeting and gave the following report:

Three-year Council Finances: When the 2023/24 budget was agreed in February 2023 the forecast gap over the next three years was outlined as £100m. However, the latest Executive report states that the expected gap for 2024/25 of circa £40m will now be considerably higher.

The report also states that it is imperative that action be taken to identify significant savings. The same Executive report also shows an accumulative budget gap of £98.8m in 2026/27.

Customer Access Points: Customers who need in-person help or advice from Somerset Council will find support at all Somerset Libraries. From July, they will be able to set up virtual, face-to-face meetings on the spot so people can speak directly to a member of the Customer Service team. Customer Access Points were initially set up in seven libraries in April when Somerset Council, now after a successful trial, it is being extended to all Somerset's libraries. The support will be provided during library opening hours, which, in most cases, includes weekends.

Surface dressing programme: The Highways team have started to surface dress some roads as part of the summer maintenance programme. Surface dressing is a recognised maintenance technique for sealing a road, improving skid resistance, and preventing water getting under the surface. The work can only be carried out in dry weather, so the Council's surface dressing programme is flexible, and dates can change at short notice. You can check which roads are being surface dressed here: www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/surface-dressing/.

Eel recovery project: Endangered eels are getting a helping hand at Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve. The Council's Countryside team is working with the Environment Agency (EA) to help increase nationally declining numbers of European Eels (*Anguilla Anguilla*). European eels are critically endangered due to overfishing, disease, and the blocking of waterways with dams and weirs, preventing them from completing their migration and breeding cycle. In May this year an extra 8,000 glass eels were released into the reservoir – these will develop into juvenile eels known as elvers and once mature will begin their journey to the Caribbean to spawn. To aid this, the Council's team will also install eel passes on spillways of the dam to support their movement out to the Bristol Channel.

Summer reading challenge: Youngsters aged 4-11 can join the Summer Reading Challenge by visiting Somerset Libraries. The Challenge themed around the power of play, sport, games, and physical activity offers free materials from Somerset Libraries and online via the Challenge website. The characters – brought to life by children's author and illustrator Loretta Schauer – navigate a fictional summer obstacle course and track their reading as they go, rewarded by free incentives including stickers.

National award for Children's Services: Somerset Council is celebrating after winning a prestigious Award for a partnership project delivering children's homes across the county. The Council and its partners – care providers Homes2Inspire (part of national charity, Shaw Trust) and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust – won the 'Innovation in Partnerships' category for their trailblazing Homes and Horizons project. The project, which was developed and introduced under the previous Conservative administration is delivering 10 family-sized homes for children as part of a new model of care for Somerset's most vulnerable young people. It will also provide 20 specialist foster carers and a brand-new, therapeutic education service on two sites within the county, designed to increase young people's life chances through better educational results and improved mental health and wellbeing.

9. **Consider proposal by Coleford Conservation Group for Tree work at the Butterfly Bank**

A representative of the Coleford Conservation Group attended the meeting and explained that a grant of £800 had been secured to complete tree maintenance work at the butterfly bank which had been previously discussed and agreed in principle by the Parish Council during the spring of 2022. After discussion it was agreed that as the Parish Council was the landowner and has appropriate insurance cover, it should seek 3 quotes for the work specified by the Conservation Group and select the contractor at a later meeting. The Parish Council will then pay the contractor with the Coleford Conservation group then reimbursing the Parish Council. VAT would not be reclaimed by the Parish Council. The work should be completed during October or November 2023.

Action: Clerk to seek 3 quotes. Coleford Conservation to write to the Council with pledge to cover the costs. Agenda item for August meeting

10. Review the Community Review Action Plan

Councillors reviewed the list of actions. It was agreed that some had already been completed or started and others required the Councillors to liaise with established parish groups to see if they were able to take the suggestions forward. It was agreed that Cllr Douglas-Burke would join the working party of Cllr Townsend, Bell, Paterson and the Clerk to progress the actions gleaned from the Community Review. This will become a monthly agenda item to report back on progress or resources needed to make actions come to fruition.

Action: Working party to meet and discuss. Agenda item for August

11. Discussion around village Footpaths

Footpath reports have not been received from the wardens this year. The Clerk will get in touch with them to establish if they are happy to continue and if not, the position can be advertised. It was agreed that the Council could promote the Rights of Way website via the PC website, social media and as posters to highlight how to report issues on the footpaths and bridleways.

Action: Clerk to contact the footpath wardens. Promote the Rights of Way website

12. Highways including:

1. Councillor update – Cllr Townsend provided the following report:

- Charlton Rd/Charmborough Lane junction - loose stones reported and cleared
- Stoke Bottom - obliterated markings and signage at end of Green Lane reported and restored
- Dark Lane - pothole and subsidence reported
- Leigh on Mendip, Quarry Lane - Kilmersdon cyclist hit pothole and broke his arm, reported and repaired (pothole that is, arm still in sling)
- Whitehole Lane - edge erosion opposite Ham junction reported
- Ham - potholes along utility works reported
- Stockhill - dropped manhole covers reported again
- Church St - dropped drain below DYC reported and marked up
- Vobster Cross - vegetation severely reducing visibility reported
- Lipyeate House defects- frustration of the PC at no action recorded
- 20mph School signage - concern registered re location

The Clerk confirmed that an email had been sent following up the last letter sent to Mr Devanny of Avon & Somerset Police Continuous Improvement Officer on the 25th May 2023 which included a copy of the brochure put together for the Gladman application which outlined the safety concerns on Charmborough Lane.

Cllr Townsend requested that the following incidents also be sent to Mr Devanny:

- Details of the 2 vehicle crash at Lipyeate Cross on 21st June
- On 9th July a car was forced into the bank just north of our drive and destroyed its tyre. Evidence of a broken wheel disc in the bank at Craddock's Bottom.
- W/c 2nd July a wing mirror knocked off.

Action: Clerk to send details of recent incidents to Mr Devanny.

The Clerk had circulated information from Somerset Highways which outlined how Parish Councils could pursue installation of 20mph zones and how much that would cost. It was agreed that this would not be pursued at this point.

2. Report of any new issues to be reported:

Inconsiderate parking around the junction of Highbury Street with Church Street and Goodeaves.

Action: Cllr Townsend to monitor

13. Finance

1. Agree Bank Reconciliation

This would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Action: To be agreed at the next meeting

2. Consider 1st Quarter budget review 2023/24

The Finance working party to consider ahead of circulation to all Councillors. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Arrange working party meeting to consider budget. Agenda item for next meeting.

3. Accounts approved for payments:

The following payments were presented for payment:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| V Watts - Clerks Expenses | £ 59.00 |
| C Pearce – Spray & keys for the allotment | £ 34.96 |
| Society of Local Council Clerks – Annual membership (Clerk to invoice Holcombe & Cranmore parish councils for their contribution) | £ 187.00 |
| Halecombe Quarry – Grant Overpayment | £8,000.00 |
| P Ham – Sleepers for water system at allotments | £ 88.00 |

Cllr Pearce and Ham declared an interest in the payments. It was agreed that the payments should be made and cheques were signed by Cllrs Banks, Evans and the Clerk

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstention

14. **Retrospectively agree that the Chair and Vice Chair should sign the lease for the allotment field, and that the council's solicitors should witness the signing of the lease on behalf of the clerk.**

The lease for the new allotment land had been signed by Cllr Pearce and Ham as previously agreed at the meeting on 22nd March 2023. However, as the agenda and minutes did not accurately reflect that the correct process had been followed, the Council is required to retrospectively agree that Cllr Pearce and Ham could sign the lease and be witnessed by the solicitors Mogers and Drewett as requested by the land owner's solicitors and in line with the Parish Council Standing Orders. This action was proposed by Cllr Barrett and seconded by Cllr Banks and a vote taken.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

15. **Update on uptake of the new Allotments**

To date there are 17 plots already taken with another 5 being issued this week. There are 8 people expected to pay imminently, a further 15 who have expressed an interest and 5 on the waiting list from outside of the parish.

The next working party meeting will take place Weds 26th July at 7pm

16. **Discuss and agree whether to add a page to the Parish Council website for Allotments**

A quote of £30 had been received from the Western Web to add a specific page to the Parish website for the Coleford allotments. It was proposed by Cllr Barrett and seconded by Cllr Ham that the quote should be accepted and the page created.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to instruct Western Web to complete the work.

17. **Update on the supply of Fencing for the Hardcourts and select Contractor**

The Clerk confirmed that she was waiting to hear from the contractors where a sample of the preferred fencing can be viewed. Cllr Pearce and Townsend agreed that once the site was

confirmed they would visit and report back on the quality of the product as well as speaking with the contact who agreed to give a reference for the preferred contractor so that a decision could be made.

Action: Cllr Townsend and Pearce to make the site visit and speak with the referee. Agenda item for August

18. Meetings to attend or attended

SALC training dates – Clerk to send to Cllr Douglas-Burke. Cllrs to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend

LCN meeting 31/07/23 at Pilton Village Hall at 7pm – Cllrs Pearce and Townsend to attend

18/07/23 at 5.30pm – Hansons, Whatley Quarry. Cllr Pearce and Townsend to attend

19/07/23 at 7pm @ The Hub – Working party meeting (Cllrs Allen, Barrett, Drescher, Ham, West and the Clerk) with the Coleford Athletic Football Club

19. Correspondence

Various messages from social media were reviewed – It was agreed that a statement would be compiled by the Clerk and Cllr Douglas-Burke for circulation via social media, the parish magazine and website to state that the Parish Council will not respond directly to questions raised on social media. It is not the Clerks responsibility to respond. All communication should be done via the parish meetings, email or letter for consideration at a Parish Council meeting.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Douglas-Burke to draft statement for agreement by email prior to circulating

05/07/23 - Somerset Council Pension Fund - Consultation on Funding Strategy Statement. No action required.

20. Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion

A copy of the Wedmore Green Charter had been shared with all Councillors who were invited to consider which points could be taken forward by Coleford Parish Council. The Climate Group will also be considering the Charter. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting when it is hoped that it can be adopted.

Action: Councillors to review the Wedmore Green Charter. Agenda item for August.

21. Date of Next Meetings:

26th July 2023 @ 7pm Planning meeting

9th August 2023 @ 7pm Parish Council meeting

23rd August 2023 @ 7pm Planning meeting

The meeting finished at 21.30hrs