

# Parish Council of Coleford

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Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council  
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## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023

**Present** Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Bell, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Paterson, Moulding and Pearce

In attendance: No members of the public present.  
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

### 1. Public Forum

- 1.1 A member of the public had raised several questions relating to stones, the proposed composting toilet and composting at the new allotments. It was agreed that this would be addressed at the next allotment working party meeting which would then be fed back to all allotment holders.

*Action: Agenda item for next Allotment working party meeting*

- 1.2 A request was made for a sign warning traffic of pedestrians between the bus stop at Upper Vobster and the new allotments.

*Action: Cllr Townsend to ask Somerset Highways to install a sign*

- 1.3 Concern was raised over an incident on the Newbury Road when a young person ran out of Highbury Playing Field after a football in front of a car. It was suggested that a barrier be placed in front of the gate to reduce the risk of this happening again.

*Action: Clerk to seek quote for barrier to be installed.*

- 1.4 It was agreed that Mendip Country Practice would be an agenda item to discuss the concerns that have been raised regarding the booking process and ability to obtain face to face appointments.

*Action: Agenda item for September meeting.*

### 2. Apologies for Absence

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

### 3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

### 4. Agree the minutes

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 had been circulated to all Councilors. It was agreed that they accurately reflected the meetings and should be approved.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 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*

## 6. Reports

### 6.1 Somerset Council

Somerset Cllr Philip Ham gave the following report:

**Council Finances:** Although the 2022/3 Accounts for the five legacy Councils (District and County) are yet to be finalised and may still not be audited before Christmas, the latest projection is that there will be a £20m overspend which will need to be met from reserves. Perhaps more worrying is the first accounts available since April for the new Unitary Council shows a projected overspend more than £28 million for the current year. Again, reserves will have to be used unless significant savings are made in the remaining 9 months of the year.

Cllr Ham said that an outside consultant had been bought in to review Children Services to see if there are any savings to be made. The same has been done with Adult Services and they have said that no savings can be made in the current financial year but possible £5 million savings in the next 2 year.

**Commercial properties:** Cllr Ham explained that several years ago the District Councils borrowed money and invested in commercial properties. Mendip District Council was the only council to borrow at a long-term fixed rate which has ensured that they continue to make a profit. A loan of £20 million has had to be borrowed to help out the other District Councils who did not fix the rate. 3 of their tenants are in liquidation.

**Phosphate mitigation:** Somerset Council is hoping to secure £10.5m Government funding to deliver phosphate mitigation measures which will unlock the delivery of 18,000 new homes across the area. The funding would be used to expand the existing phosphate credit scheme and deliver mitigation measures including the installation of modular units to provide a secondary treatment process at wastewater treatment works in the catchment area. Salinity Solutions and Wessex Water have delivered a no-cost trial to demonstrate the efficacy of their modular water treatment units for phosphate mitigation. A unit has been in place at the Fivehead Wastewater Treatment Works for two weeks allowing independent water sampling to be undertaken. Early indications show promising results with the first verified laboratory results showing over 98% of phosphates and 88% of nitrates removed.

**Volunteers needed:** From supporting people looking for work to making a real difference to young people, there's a Somerset Council volunteer role just waiting to be filled! Two openings are available with the Youth Justice Team:

- **Family Group Conference Volunteers:** A family group conference is led by family members to plan and make decisions for a child who is at risk. Volunteers in this role support parents who may struggle to express their views.

- **Reparation Mentors:** Volunteers in this role support young people to fully participate in reparation work as part of a Court Order. This is a really rewarding role where you are actively supporting the young person to develop life skills whilst supporting their local community.

In addition, the Schools Appeals Panel is looking for independent members either with or without direct experience in schools. Panel members help to make sure all the appeals for maintained schools and academies are conducted in a fair and transparent way. Appeals can include admissions, exclusions, and transport. Information can be found at <https://volunteering.somerset.gov.uk/>

**Yeovil Literary Festival:** Yeovil Literary Festival takes place this year between Thursday 26 and Monday 30 October with events taking place at Westlands Entertainment Venue and Yeovil Library. Tickets have gone on sale for events including Deborah Meaden, Sarah Beeny, Noel Fitzpatrick, Chris Packham, Kate Mosse, Ian Dunt, Roger McGough and Tommy Jessop. Visit <https://www.yeovilliteraryfestival.co.uk/> to book tickets or call 01935 422884.

**Green Flag Awards:** The international Green Flag award, now in its fourth decade, is a sign to the public that the space has the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained, and has excellent visitor facilities. The parks and greenspaces awarded Green Flag status in Somerset this year are:

- Ham Hill Country Park (Yeovil)
- Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve
- Yeovil Country Park
- Apex Cove and Marine Park (Burnham on Sea)
- Swains Lane Nature Reserve (Wellington)
- Vivary Park (Taunton)
- Blenheim Gardens (Minehead)
- Wellington Park

**Allergen laws:** 100 sandwich shops, delis across Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay have recently been tested for compliance of new governments legislation on allergens. Trading standards found that 56 out of 100 businesses were in breach of the new rules which require full ingredient and allergen labelling on all food made on premises and pre-packed for direct sale. Of those 56 some 34 premises failed because they contained an undeclared allergen, often because the product had little or no labelling. All 56 premises are now being advised as to how to meet the new safety standards.

At the Shepton Mallet Local Community Network meeting on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023, Somerset Cllr Ham was appointed as Chair.

## 6.2 PCSO

The Clerk met with PCSO Robert Nell and Louise Perry to discuss the main concerns within the parish. A report had been sent showing the crime statistics for the previous 12 months which showed the in the last month there had been a substantial drop in the last month. It is hoped that this will continue.

## 7. **Planning Applications**

There were none.

## 8. **Planning updates including enforcement issues**

Update to be given at the next meeting.

*Agenda item for the September meeting.*

**9. Discuss and agree whether to respond to the consultation for Mendip Local Plan II Sites and Policies adopted 2021 with revisions December 2022**

Cllr Townsend had circulated a robust response which had been circulated to all Councillors for consideration prior to the meeting. It was agreed that a couple of minor changes should be made before submitting to Somerset Council.

*Action: Clerk to amend and submit*

**10. Consider and agree whether to ask 2 parishioners to join the Community Plan working party to review the Action Plan**

It was agreed that 2 members of the original Community Review team should join the working party to help progress the action plan.

*Action: Clerk to progress*

**11. Consider and agree whether to hold a second Community event on 16th September 2023 time TBC (Inc paying the cost of hall hire £TBC).**

A member of the original Community Review team attended and requested the support of the Parish Council for a second community event to showcase the clubs and groups that the village has to offer. It was agreed that this supports the point raised within the Community review action plan and will benefit the community. Councillors agreed that the cost of 3 hours hall hire at the Legion would be covered by the Parish Council.

*Action: The Clerk to assist in helping to promote the event*

**12. Highways including:**

**12.1 Councillor update**

Charmborough Lane - Highways have made a decent job of the repair work opposite Lipyeate House.

Church St – The dropped drain below Douglas Yates Court has been repaired

Vobster Cross – Vegetation has been cut back

Stoke Bottom - Surface dressing scheduled for next week

There has been no response from Mr Devanny the Continuous Improvement Officer at Avon and Somerset Police on the accident records and highway safety submitted on Charmborough Lane. It was agreed that this should be elevated to a higher level.

*Action: Clerk to progress the accident records with Avon and Somerset*

**12.2 Report of any new issues to be reported**

There was concern over the visibility at the junction of Charity Lane onto the Babington / Vobster road. It was asked if a mirror could be installed.

*Action: Cllr Ham to investigate*

**13. Finance**

**13.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation**

The bank reconciliation was checked by Cllr Douglas-Burke and signed as correct

**13.2 Consider and approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget review 2023-24**

The Clerk circulated the reports which included forecast figures for the rest of the year, ahead of the meeting. There were no questions or concern at this point of the year and it was therefore agreed that the report should be signed by the Chair.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

- 13.3 Consider quotes for new notice board at Goodeaves  
This has already been agreed and should be completed imminently.
- 13.4 Consider quotes to clear & tidy the area behind the bench & notice board outside the Piano shop  
The Clerk had received a quote of £30 from Nippers Tippers to clear and cut the area behind the notice board and bench at the bus stop outside of the piano shop. It was agreed that the quote should be accepted.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to instruct the contractor.**

- 13.5 Consider & agree quotes for electrical work to repair showers at the Changing rooms  
The Clerk is waiting for quotes. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for September.**

- 13.6 Discuss & agree whether to sign the contract with Sports Surfacing Systems for the MUGA fence  
The Clerk had circulated the order form for consideration by Councillors. It was agreed that the form would be signed by the Chair to confirm the order.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

**Action: Clerk to instruct the contractor.**

- 13.7 Update on grant applications – agree which to submit  
Cllrs Ham, Townsend and Pearce to meet to discuss future projects and available funding opportunities.

The Clerk confirmed that an application for funding from the Halecombe Quarry Fund had been submitted to cover the cost of a rainwater harvesting structure at Goodeaves allotments.

- 13.8 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

HMRC - National Insurance	£ 121.27
Pennys – Fee for Playing field levelling	£2400.00
Somerset Playing Field Association – Annual Membership	£ 15.00
Les Allen – Play tower timber repair	£ 120.00
Signe Efix – Parking sign	£ 31.20
Playsafety – Annual play equipment inspection	£ 471.00
Water 2 Business – Changing rooms water supply	£ 99.30
Westernweb – Creation of an allotment page on website	£ 36.00

It was agreed that all of the payments should approved. Cheques were signed by Cllr Evans, Ham and the Clerk.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

#### **14. Allotments – Discuss and agree:**

- 14.1 Whether to submit planning permission for the car park at the new Coleford allotments.  
Plans have been drawn and Cllr Townsend has been working on completing the application form. It is intended that it will be submitted before the next meeting.

- 14.2 The rent for non-Coleford residents taking plots at the new allotments  
After discussion it was agreed that rent for non-Coleford residents would be set at £70 per year or a full plot and £45 for a half plot with a maximum of 10 plots being allocated. It was agreed that Vobster residents would be accepted immediately and charged the same rate as Coleford residents.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to amend the list of rent*

- 14.3 Purchase of trees for the creation of the orchard from the Climate Grant funding.  
Coleford Conservation group have agreed to select the variety of fruit trees for planting at the new Coleford allotments. It is planned that the trees will be planted in October / November.

*Action: Clerk to liaise with Coleford Conservation group*

- 14.4 Whether to include the grass cutting of the Coleford Allotments to the current grass cutting contract.  
LSJ Gardening Services have quoted £315 to cut the tracks and boundary area for the rest of the cutting season, which equates to £52.50 per month. Any additional plots will cost £3 per cut. All agreed that the quote should be accepted and included on the remains of the grass cutting contract.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to notify the contractor*

- 14.5 Consider all Coleford Allotments including review of the rent, facilities and agreements  
Cllr Pearce said that he had spoken with Alan Cavill of the National Allotment Society who had agreed to come and complete a review of all the village plots in September or October 2023.

It was agreed that all village allotment holders would be given a rent holiday to allow the invoicing to be realigned with the new allotments meaning that all invoices would be dated 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 for the next 12 months.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Cllr Pearce to arrange a date for the allotment review. Clerk to notify the village allotment holders of payment holiday.*

It was agreed that Cllr Pearce would ask Alan Cavill the status on whether the Council can share the NAS digital magazine with the allotment holders.

*Action: Agenda item for the next meeting*

- 14.6 **Consider offer by the Coleford Conservation Group to pay for a new pear tree to replace the diseased one at Coleford Playing field orchard**

The Clerk explained that the Coleford Conservation Group had offered to pay for a new pear tree to replace the one which had been removed as a result of disease. All agreed to accept the offer.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to notify the Conservation Group and thank them for the offer*

15. **Update on the Coleford Climate Group including adopting the Coleford Green Charter, Statement of Intent.**

Cllr Moulding had shared a draft of the Coleford Green Charter which had also been considered by the Coleford Climate Group. It was suggested that the reference to glyphosate as a brand, should be removed but otherwise all Councillors agreed that it should be adopted.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions**

*Action: Clerk to amend and place on the website with the other Council documents.*

**16. Update on the role of the Footpath Warden and whether to recruit after recent resignation**

In light of the recent resignation, the clerk will advertise for 2 footpath wardens to cover both the North and South of the village.

*Action: Clerk to promote the role of the footpath warden*

**17. Consider and accept quote for repairs to damaged fencing at Highbury play area and the Highbury car park**

It was agreed that the Clerk would seek a further quote for the Armco barrier option.

*Action: Agenda item for the next meeting*

**18. Meetings to attend or attended**

16/08/23 @ 6pm at the hub - Community Action plan review. Cllrs Douglas-Burke, Paterson and Townsend to be joined by 2 members of the Community review working party and the Clerk.

31/07/23 – Shepton Mallet Local Community Network – Cllrs Ham, Pearce, Townsend and Douglas-Burke attended the meeting

**19. Correspondence**

06/08/23 – Email received regarding the overgrown path to the rear of Goodeaves.

*Action: Clerk to pass on complaint to Aster Homes*

31/07/23 – EDF confirmation of payments remaining the same for Changing room electricity.

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

There were none.

**21. Date of Next Meetings:**

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 @ 7pm Planning meeting

13<sup>th</sup> September 2023 @ 7pm Parish Council meeting

The meeting finished at 21.45hrs