

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 11th October 2023

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Banks, Bell, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Paterson, Pearce, and West

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

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 A member of the public attended and said that the newly installed school lights at the 20mph signs are still not working and the sign and lights on the other side of the school junction are yet to be installed.

Action: Cllr Townsend to chase up when this will be installed.

- 1.2 Although there are pot holes on the road between Coleford and Vobster that have been marked up for repair, there is still one that is on the bend opposite the newly installed Vobster name sign.

Action: Cllr Townsend to report

- 1.3 It was reported that the pavement outside the new shop is due to start on Monday the 16th October 2023.

- 1.4 It was asked whether it would be possible for 'KEEP CLEAR' to be painted on the road outside of the Co-op which had been particularly bad since Church Street had been closed. It was agreed that this might be a cheap fix to help with the ongoing issues.

Action: Cllr Ham and Townsend to establish if this could be actioned by Somerset Highways

- 1.5 It was asked if a driver had to display a blue badge every time, they parked in a disabled parking bay. There is a car that is regularly parking in a disabled parking bay with no blue card being displayed.

Action: The Clerk to ask the PCSO to make enquiries

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Barrett, Drescher, Allen, Moulding, Townsend 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 13th September 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, 1 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to upload to the 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 asked why the bin outside the Church Hall had been taped up to prevent use. The Clerk confirmed that she had not been made aware that this had been done but would speak with Idverde.

Action: Clerk to investigate

- 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

- 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

- There has been no response from Mr Devanny on accident records and highway safety on Charmborough Lane after many months. Councillors agreed that this should be elevated to the next level for a response.

Action: Clerk to progress response from Mr Devanny

- Discuss whether to support the Christmas Light switch on 2023
Liaise with CROCK's to establish their plans for the Christmas event. Cllr Ham and the Clerk will consider the points raised that might need to be addressed to ensure the event can go ahead.

Action: Cllr Ham and Clerk to action

6. Reports

6.1 Somerset Council

Somerset Cllr Philip Ham gave the following report:

Register to vote: Residents are being urged to check their electoral registration details or risk losing their chance to vote on decisions that affect them. Letters have gone out to an initial 83,000 houses across the County and all other households will be written to later this month. Residents can tell the Council of changes and if there are new people eligible to be registered at their address, they will receive an 'invitation to register form' either through the post (or via email, if this contact method has been provided).

School admissions 2024: Somerset parents and carers of children due to start school or move on to their next school in September 2024 are being urged to apply for their place online and on time. The application website for children moving to Secondary and Upper Schools is now open and parents and carers can apply for places from now until 31 October 2023 by visiting www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/starting-at-a-secondary-or-upper-school-in-september/ The website for children starting school for the first time is open until 15 January 2024 at: www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/apply-to-start-school-for-the-first-time/

Go Green grants: 'Go Green Scheme' and the 'Somerset Green Business Grant Scheme' are being introduced to offer businesses help and financial support to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. The scheme offers free energy audits and support to develop individual, costed and prioritised sustainability plans. Grants can be capital and/or revenue and fund up to

50% of total eligible project costs, with the remainder funded by the applicant. The scheme is now open for applications for activity and expenditure which must be completed by end of March 2024. The deadline for submission is 31st October. Further information is available at www.somerset.gov.uk/business-economy-and-licences/funding-and-grants-for-business/

Plastics recycling: Every piece of plastic Somerset Council collected from households and via the recycling sites last year was recycled in the UK. In total 6,500 tonnes of plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays all went to UK companies to be turned into new products and packaging – everything from plastic wrapping and compost bins to fleece jackets. The figure is up from 99.4% the previous year.

Youth Parliament: Young people aged 11 – 17 who live in Somerset or who go to school, college or a youth club in the County have the opportunity to influence change by nominating themselves to stand for election as a Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP). The deadline for nominations is midnight Sunday 12 November. Somerset’s MYPs represent 3 areas – Taunton Deane & Somerset West, Bridgwater & Sedgemoor, and South Somerset & Mendip. Those wishing to stand should visit www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer/having-your-voice-heard/democracy-and-young-people/webpage to register their interest. Somerset’s 3 elected Youth Parliamentarians and their deputies represent Somerset at the national UK Youth Parliament. The County’s current MYPs will hand over to the newly elected MYPs from next year, and their new term of office runs from March 2024 until February 2026.

Hosting: Autumn sees the return to university or college for many young people in Somerset, often leaving parents or carers with a sense of longed for peace and quiet. For others, a spare room gathering clutter and dust may also be ripe for a sort out and some useful employ. Hosting could be the answer, as the need continues for more host families to help support Ukrainian nationals forced to flee their homes and seek sanctuary in a new and unfamiliar setting. Since the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022, Somerset has welcomed over 1,500 Ukrainians to date, with host families playing a pivotal role in creating a safe environment for guests to re-settle and rebuild their lives in some way, supporting and helping them navigate a new life in the UK. Visit www.somerset.gov.uk/housing-support/homes-for-ukraine/ for more information.

Green libraries: Libraries Week, 2nd – 8th October, celebrates the nation’s libraries and this year’s theme is ‘Green Libraries’ which encourages communities to be more sustainable and support climate action. To mark the week, Somerset Librarians have launched a free loaning scheme of Thermal Imaging Cameras to help residents identify heat loss in their homes and take action to improve its energy efficiency and reduce fuel bills this winter. Residents can borrow the camera for three days by simply visiting their local library and speaking to a member of staff who can reserve the kit for them. Full details of the scheme can be found at www.southsomersetenvironment.co.uk/thermalimagingproject

BT prosecuted: British Telecommunications (BT) has been fined for carrying out work on Somerset’s highway network without adequate traffic management or a valid street works permit. The utility firm was fined £12,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,158, plus a £2,000 victim surcharge by Taunton Magistrates after it pleaded guilty to offences.

Wells Christmas Market: The traditional ‘Christmas in Wells’ will again operate from 9am – 3pm on Saturday 16th December 2023 and will welcome more than 100 stalls to the Market Place and on the Bishop’s Palace Green. Visitors can enjoy seasonal gifts and local food and drink with live music and entertainment

6.2 PCSO

No report had been received. Two Councillors had said that they were unhappy about the way that the PCSO had managed two different incidents in the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to highlight concern

Action: Clerk to write to PCSO

7. **Planning Applications**

7.1 2023/1813/LBC - The provision of a glazed screen to main staircase to protect the balustrade. Newbury Manor School Tinkers Lane Newbury Frome Somerset

All Councillors had the opportunity to consider the application prior to the meeting. After discussion it was agreed that the decision should be left to the Planning officer in conjunction with the Listed building officer.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention (Somerset Councillor)

Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer

7.2 2023/1780/HSE - Single storey porch extension to the front elevation.

49 Farley Dell Coleford Frome Somerset BA3 5PN

All Councillors had the opportunity to consider the application prior to the meeting. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Paterson that the application should be recommended

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention (Somerset Councillor)

Action: The Clerk to notify the planning office

8. **Planning updates including enforcement issues**

The spreadsheet showing the current list of planning applications and their status had been circulated to all Councillors.

Cllr Ham said that he had emailed the Planning enforcement team regarding the planning application ref 2023/0492/FUL – the levelling of the football pitch at Highbury Playing Field, regarding the complaint lodged with Somerset Planning which said that work had started at the site. There has been not response as yet.

9. **Highways including:**

9.1 Councillor update

Cllr Townsend did not attend but provided the following updates:

- Cllr Townsend requested Highways carry out an inspection of both sides of the road from Stockhill to the bottom of Vobster. Good to see they have marked up for repair the pothole at the bottom on the left and also on the left as you leave the village just beyond the last house.
- Cllr Townsend reminded Highways of our concern over the north end of Dark Lane. He confirmed that he was not aware of any action as yet.
- Cllr Townsend asked if we had any reports of road traffic accidents round the village in the last month? The Clerk confirmed that a request for details on accidents had not yet been publicly made but would agree appropriate words this week.
- Do we have a reply from Mr Devanny of Highway Safety? The continued delay (over 6 months?) raises serious questions about their record keeping. Perhaps we should consider an FOI request? The Clerk confirmed that the request had not yet been elevated to the Police Commissioner but would be made a priority for this week.

- 9.2 Report of any new issues to be reported
Concern was raised over the road surface in particular on the way out of Coleford towards Vobster and Mells.

It was noted that the dip by the telegraph post on Dark Lane is getting worse.

Action: Cllr Townsend to report to Somerset Highways.

- 9.3 Discuss whether to support the Slow Ways national walking network
It was agreed that the Clerk would promote the scheme on Facebook and the website.

Action: Clerk to promote

10. Finance

- 10.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation
The bank reconciliation to be checked before the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to action

- 10.2 Update on Halecombe Quarry Community Fund grant funding application
The Clerk confirmed that the grant application which had been submitted for funds towards a rainwater harvesting structure at Goodeaves allotments was successful. £1270 should be transferred within the next 14 days.

Action: The Clerk to notify the contractor and arrange for the work to be completed.

- 10.3 Consider 3rd Quarter budget review
This will be considered at the October planning meeting.

Action: October agenda item

- 10.4 Consider quotes for fruit trees at the new allotments
The Clerk presented the quotes for 8 x apple trees from Ashridge Trees Ltd which came to a total of £215.00. Rocky Mountain Nursery Ltd quoted £202.00 for 8 x trees, a mix of pears, plums and gages. It was noted that a check should be completed to establish if more stakes, ties and guards were required.

It was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Paterson that the quotes for the trees should be accepted and the order placed. The cost of this was included within the Climate grant. It was agreed that the trees should be delivered to Cllr Ham between the 22nd and 24th November ready for planting either Saturday 25th /Sunday 26th November if this is agreeable with Coleford Conservation Volunteers who will hopefully take the lead.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, Abstentions

Action: Clerk to place the order, agree date to plant the trees and then promote the event.

- 10.5 Consider quotes for willow for planting at Coleford playing field
The Clerk reported that she had spoken with Musgrove Willows who have been recommended as an excellent supplier for a 3m living willow dome kit, which will cost £130.30 including VAT. The cost of this was included within the Climate grant. The Clerk had registered to be notified when the product became available which is likely to be around Christmas / New Year. The Council agreed that the order should be placed as soon as the product was available

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to place the order once the product becomes available

10.6 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

HMRC - National Insurance	£122.02
V Watts - Clerks Expenses	£ 35.00
V Watts – Printer (Total cost £200.78)	£100.39
LSJ Gardening Services – Allotment grass cutting	£336.00
LSJ Gardening Services – Cemetery Hedge cutting	£415.00
Alan Townsend – Planning fee for Allotment car park	£181.00
Cam Valley Wildlife Group – Annual membership	£ 5.00
PATA UK – Payroll	£ 36.15
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal – Wreath	£ 22.50
SALC – NALC & SALC Annual Affiliation fee	£654.40
Philip Ham – Expenses to cover visit by Allan Cavill	£ 50.00

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

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

11. Allotments:

11.1 Update on the planning application for the car park

Cllr Townsend had emailed to say that he had addressed the issues raised by the planning department and hoped that the application for the car park would be validated soon.

12. Consider creating an emergency plan

It was agreed that the Clerk would share the Holcombe emergency plan with all Councillors. Everyone said that they felt that it would be good to have a plan for Coleford however recognized that this could be in a simple form or more extensive version. Research will be done by the Clerk to see if there are templates available to work with.

Action: Clerk to research Emergency Plan templates. Agenda item for next meeting.

13. Consider proposal from Coleford Athletic to upgrade the changing rooms

The Clerk reported that a quote had been received to install a hot water cylinder with the intention of it running the showers in the home changing rooms with the electricity supply running the away room and referee showers. It was proposed by Cllr Paterson and seconded by Cllr West that the quote for £2900 should be accepted.

Action: Clerk to place the order with the contractor

14. Review grass cutting contract for 2024/2025/2026 for tender process

The Clerk presented the grass cutting specification for consideration. It was agreed that the document should refer only to a two-year contract with mention that it could be extended for a third year if the Council has been happy with the quality of the work. Some minor amendments were suggested which the Clerk will make and then circulate to all Councillors for consideration.

Action: Clerk to amend the contract and circulate

It was agreed that the contract would be advertised in the Frome and Shepton Mallet newspapers. The Clerk to seek a quote which will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Quote for advertising to be an agenda item for the next meeting

During the discussion it was suggested that the Cemetery rules should be reviewed as it has become apparent that some of the decorations on the graves were causing issues for the grass cutting contractor.

Action: Cemetery rules to be an agenda item for the November meeting

15. Playing Fields and Play Equipment including:

12.1 Consider annual play inspections reports and action where required

The Clerk to recirculate the inspection reports to the working party for review to identify any work that needs to be completed.

Action: Clerk to action. Agenda item for the planning meeting.

12.2 Consider quotes for installation of a safety barrier

The quote received for £220.70 to build and install a safety barrier at the entrance gate near the pump track was accepted. The barrier will be like the one at the Hub.

Action: Clerk to place the orders

16. Meetings to attend or attended

18/10/23@ 7pm – Shepton Mallet Local Community Network. Oakhill Village Hall or virtually on Teams. Cllr Ham is chairing the meeting and Cllr Pearce to attend on behalf of Coleford Parish Council.

SALC training dates – Councillors to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend.

17. Correspondence

CPRE magazine

Action: Clerk to pass to Cllr Townsend

10/10/23 – Email from Sports Surfacing Solutions to confirm that work will start to install the fence at the hard courts on Monday 16th October which will take a week to complete. Cllr Ham and the Clerk to meet the contractors on site at 10.30am

Action: Clerk and Cllr Ham to meet on site at 10.30am

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

The Chair stated that he had been made aware of an advert posted by Somerset Council in a local newspaper which promoted the auction of 2 plots of land at Stockhill, Coleford. It was agreed that the Clerk would write a letter to Somerset Council objecting to the proposed sale.

Action: Clerk to write a letter of objection to Somerset Council.

19. Date of Next Meetings:

25th October 2023 @ 7pm Planning meeting

2nd November 2023 @ 7pm Small Grant Party meeting

8th November 2023 @ 7pm Parish Council meeting

The meeting finished at 21.45hrs