

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 25th October 2023

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Allen, Banks, Evans, Paterson, Pearce, and Townsend

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

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 It was noted that work at the entrance to the new shop has commenced.
- 1.2 The water cover outside the Temperance Hall on Highbury Street flips up when it is stood. This has been reported previously but Cllr Townsend had reported to Somerset Highways highlighting that it is dangerous.
- 1.3 Reports of further exploratory work at the field between Brewery Lane and Anchor Road have been noted. It was agreed that there could be no action by the Parish Council until a planning application was submitted.

2. Apologies for Absence

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

Cllrs Bell, Douglas-Burke, Moulding and West did not attend.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Finance

4.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation had been completed and would be checked by Cllr Paterson at the end of the meeting.

4.2 Consider and agree advertising charge for grass cutting tender

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Allen that the grass cutting contract would be advertised in the Western Daily Press at a cost of £79 + VAT

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

Action: The Clerk to place the order

4.3 Agree bank transfer for fruit tree from for Ashridge Trees & Rocky Mountain Nursery Ltd

It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Evans that a bank transfer for £215.00 for the 8 x apple trees from Ashridge Trees Ltd and £202.00 for 8 x trees, a mix of pears, plums and gages from Rocky Mountain Nursery Ltd should be made.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, Abstentions

The Clerk stated that the bare root trees from Ashridge Trees are not available for delivery until at least December. It was agreed that the Clerk would discuss a new planting date with the Coleford Conservation group and once agreed, arrange delivery and promote the new date for volunteers to attend.

Action: Clerk to arrange the bank transfer and agree date to plant the trees and promote the event.

4.4 Consider 2rd Quarter budget review 2023-24

The Clerk had worked with Cllr Pearce to produce a report showing the actual spend to date and predicted forecast for the year 2023-24, which had been circulated to all Councillors.

It is expected that the current projects e.g. fencing for the hardcourts and creation of the allotments would come in on budget and when the earmarked reserves were taken into consideration it shows that there will be a predicted overspend of approximately £3K

It was proposed by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Ham that the review should be approved.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

4.5 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

SALC – Training x 5	£125.00
Les Allen – Creation of safety barrier	£220.70
Westernweb Ltd – Email annual renewal	£180.00

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

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

5. **Allotments:- Update on planning application for the car park**

The Planning Office had requested more detailed plans in order to validate the application. Cllr Townsend had arranged for the revised plans to be prepared over the weekend so that they could be submitted next week.

Action: Cllr Townsend to submit the revised plans at the earliest opportunity

6. **Consider improvements to the electric showers in the Coleford Athletic Changing rooms**

The Clerk was concerned that the installation of the hot water cylinder as agreed at the last meeting would not resolve the situation with the overloaded electricity supply in the changing rooms. After discussion it was agreed that further investigation was required and should be presented at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to progress. Agenda item for next meeting.

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

The Clerk had circulated the updated grass cutting specification for consideration. It was agreed that the Highbury playing field and pump track needed to be itemized separately from the play area to allow for this element to be removed if the pitch levelling progressed during the contract period. The Clerk to amend the document and send to local contractors inviting them to submit a tender.

Action: Clerk to amend and send to contractors

8. Review annual play inspections reports and action where required

Councillors from the Playing Field working party are consider the annual inspection reports and will submit a report for the November meeting

Action: Agenda item for the November meeting.

9. Update on the installation of the hard courts fence

Phase 1 of the hardcourt renovations is now complete with the new fence installed. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for working with the contractors to ensure that the project ran smoothly.

The 2nd phase will be to purchase new goals/basketball hoops, phase 3 to remark the courts and phase 4 to purchase new tennis nets. It is hoped that all phases would be completed over the next 2 years.

Thanks were given to Somerset Council who awarded £20K from the Shape Lottery Grant and Halecombe Quarry who awarded £4K from the Halecombe Quarry Community Fund. The balance of £5215 has been funded by the Parish Council.

10. Review of the Coleford Youth Club report

A report had been received reviewing the period of July to September 2023 which noted that there had been an increase in the number of young people attending the Thursday night club. The club is thriving although there is concern with numbers increasing there is potential concerns with managing the numbers and space.

Member participation is good with the focus this quarter being mental health, bereavement, healthy eating, emotional wellbeing, personal safety, road safety, bullying awareness, healthy relationships, project work, anti-social, behavior and budgeting.

It was highlighted that the kitchen has minimal equipment available to the club and some equipment to support cooking sessions would be beneficial.

Over the next quarter it is hoped that a steering group will be formed. The group would like to fund raise to go towards a residential / day trip to help develop skills, gain confidence and experience different opportunities. They wish to link with other community groups and clubs to provide taster sessions for young people to try. Seek funding for further resources and find volunteers to support with the youth club sessions.

11. Correspondence

CPRE AGM – 24/11/23 @ 7pm Stoke St Gregory Village Hall. Cllr Townsend to attend
18/10/23 - Consultation by Somerset Council on Local Boundary Commission Review. Process to start 07/11/23. Somerset Cllrs Clarke and Ham to keep Council informed.

25/10/23 – Email received from a resident asking if the Council will be offering a ‘Warm space’ during this winter.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

18/10/23 - Citizen Advice Somerset. Request for funding

Action: Clerk to add to precept discussion

20/10/23 – Request from resident to replace a damaged Fire Hydrant marker at Mendip Vale, by the green.

Action: Clerk to action

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

The Chairman explained that Somerset Council were progressing with selling the land adjacent to 11 and 12 Stock Hill Court by auction without planning permission and knowing that the land is a protected green space. Any development would not only see the green space reduced affecting the street scene, but would require the removal of 8 trees which would be totally unacceptable and against Somersets Climate policy.

The Clerk confirmed that no acknowledgement had been received from the letter sent after the last meeting

Cllr Ham said that although the Council needs revenue, the negative effect this sale would have on the inhabitants would outweigh the small benefit from the money obtained from selling the plots without planning permission. In fact, to sell them without planning permission would be underselling a Council asset.

Action: Clerk to follow up on the letter asking for a response

13. Date of Next Meetings:

8th November 2023 @ 7pm Parish Council meeting

22nd November 2023 @ 7pm Planning meeting

The meeting finished at 21.10hrs