

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council
Tel: 07971 516916 / 01749 880428
Email: clerk@colefordpc.org.uk

Newsletter for January 2024

Planning



The Council had received an email notifying the Parish Council of the public consultation launched by Rainier to introduce their outline plans for Land off Anchor Road, Coleford for 75 new homes, including 30% affordable homes, alongside significant areas of public open space and play areas. Many parishioners have been in touch expressing their concerns which are the same reasons as those raised for the Gladman application.

The Parish Council will respond once the outline planning application has been submitted.

PCSO

PCSO William Mortimer will be holding a monthly drop-in session at the Hub on 22nd January, 19th February, 18th March from 10am to 12noon to allow members of the parish the opportunity to discuss their concerns.



Coleford Warm Space

With the cost-of-living crisis, many people are facing tough decisions. Some of us have moved to working from home following the pandemic and are facing a winter with increased energy bills. Others are facing even harder decisions about whether to heat or eat. So, on each **Monday** through **January & February** the doors to **The Hub, Church Street, Coleford** will be open from **9.30am to 4.30pm** to welcome *anyone* in need of warmth. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available at no cost. During the day the following activities will be happening:



- The Post Office is open from 10am to 11.45am
- Board games available from 10am to 12.30pm
- The Talking Café* from 1pm to 2.30pm
- The Food Bank is open from 1pm to 2.30pm

*Talking cafes are a place to meet new people, make friends and chat to a Health Connector about activities, support groups and services in your community.

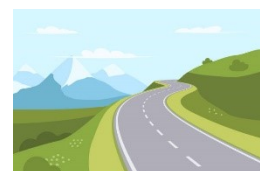
Somerset Councils disposal of assets including land at Stockhill Court

At the recent meeting it was agreed that a letter would be sent to Somerset Council regarding the disposal of the land at Stockhill. The letter highlights the reasons why the land should not be sold and will be sent from Coleford Parish Council to the following representatives from Somerset Council: Duncan Sharkey CEO, Bill Revans Leader of Somerset Council, Ross Wyke Cabinet member for Assets and Planning, Bob Filmer Chair of Corporate Resources Scrutiny and David Fothergill Leader of the Opposition.

Highways

The following items were reported:

- Stockhill - the potholes on the left leaving the village have got worse.
- Springers Hill - Reports of pothole issues but yet to be investigated.
- The village escaped the worst of the flooding although Charity Lane is a particular concern which has been reported.
- Somerset Highways have confirmed that permission was given to allow the 7.5-ton limit sign on Church Street to be temporarily removed during the building work



- Kilmersdon - potholes in Ames Lane were a particular concern to TiP runners who use it weekly and have been filled since Cllr Townsend's request.
- Highway Safety Records - we finally have a response from Mr Devanny where he now admits that their records show 7 accidents on "Anchor Rd" in the last 3 years, including 2 defined as "Death/Injury". We need to establish how the data held by the Police is made available in the planning process. This is particularly relevant with the new Anchor Rd planning proposal, but may also have implications for the Gladman decision where highway safety was not considered an issue. We asked for a site meeting, we must pursue this.

Grass and Hedge cutting contracts for 2024-26

LSJ Gardening services have been selected as the successful contractor for both the grass and hedge cutting contracts. It is a large proportion of our annual expenditure but we are pleased to be working with Jamie and his team again who have provided a quality service over the last 3 years.



Allotments:

We are pleased to announce that concessionary rates are now being offered to Goodeaves allotment holders in line with the new Coleford allotments. This is with immediate effect.

There are now only 12 plots unallocated at the new Coleford allotments and we currently have 7 plots rented to non-residents. After discussion it was agreed that the unallocated plots should be offered to other non-residents from neighbouring villages, that are already registered on the waiting list.



Date of Next Meetings:

24th January 2024 – Planning meeting

14th February 2024 - Parish Council meeting

If you have any issues that you would like to bring to the Parish Council's attention, please contact the Clerk on 07971 516916 or email clerk@colefordpc.org.uk Check out the website www.colefordpc.org.uk

Philip Ham



Somerset Council report

Somerset Cllr Philip Ham reported that:

- There have been lots of conversations around the current financial emergency at Somerset Council. There is currently a consultation running which is giving the public the opportunity to have their say on the 2024/25 budget.
- Wainwrights Quarry have applied for an extension to increase the footprint of the quarry up towards the Waggon and Horses at Doultling. This currently out for consultation.
- Hansons have removed Asham Woods from the Westdown Quarry application. There is a public open day at Whatley Quarry on the 18th January 2024 from 10am and 8pm giving members of the public the chance to consider the amendments made to the application.
- Wiltshire Council are looking to stop HGV traffic from traveling through Maiden Bradley, Corsley and Chaphmanslade which will have a massive effect on all the local quarries.

Council's Financial Position: As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced a 6.1% increase in Core Spending Power for Somerset Council. The provisional settlement is less than being forecast mainly due to reductions in Service Grant and New Homes Bonus but partially offset by a higher than forecast increase in Social Care Grant. In November, Somerset Council's Executive declared a financial emergency with a projected budget gap of £100m for 2024/25. The Council is currently inviting the public to have their say on finances and council services. The consultation is open to everyone and can be found at www.somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/budget-consultation-2024-2025/ or can be completed in libraries across Somerset. The consultation closes on 22 January.

End of Charges for DIY Waste: Following a recent change of Government legislation current charges for disposing of construction and demolition materials including: asbestos, plasterboard, hardcore and rubble from household DIY projects have been removed. Each calendar month every household will be able to take up to eight, 50 litre sacks (or equivalent 2m sheets of asbestos or plasterboard) free of charge to a recycling site over a maximum of four visits in a month. Households will need to pre-book trips to dispose of this DIY waste, telling the council the amount of material they are disposing (up to 8×50 litre sacks per month) and the number of times they will need to visit (up to four visits per month). Disposal of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble in excess of the free allowance can be paid for online.

Changes to waste collection days: Somerset Council recycling and rubbish collection days change for more than 120,000 households in western parts of the county in February. New collection routes are being introduced for homes in the former Sedgemoor and Somerset West and Taunton areas, as well as a small part of South Somerset. This means many homes in these areas will have a change in collection days from the week beginning Monday 12 February 2024. Changes will be made for the rest of the county later in the year. If a household's collection days are changing, they will receive a letter in early January making this clear. This will be followed by a service guide – including a collection day calendar – arriving near the end of January.

Phosphate Mitigation: The Government has awarded Somerset Council £9.6m of funding to deliver phosphate mitigation measures which will unlock the delivery of new homes across the area and provide for long term nature recovery. The funding will be used to expand the Council's existing phosphate credit scheme and deliver both interim and long-term phosphate mitigation measures including the use of new energy efficient water processing technology trialled at the Fivehead Wastewater Treatment Works near Taunton earlier this year.

Health Research Grant: The National Institute for Health and Care Research has awarded Somerset £5m over five years to form a Health Determinants Research Collaboration – a new research partnership to improve health and reduce health inequalities across the county. Somerset's HDRC, which is expected to launch in January 2024, will focus on the building blocks of good health such as housing, education and the physical environment to tackle the root causes of health inequalities and wider deprivation. Through the programme, the council will involve communities in applying evidence about the building blocks of health to local decisions, and in doing new research where there is not enough evidence.

The Range: A Taunton superstore has been fined £960,000, reduced to £640,000 for an early guilty plea, for food hygiene offences following a successful prosecution by Somerset Council. Guilty pleas were entered by CDS (Superstores International) Ltd, operating as The Range Home and Leisure at Hankridge, Taunton, for seven food hygiene offences in September 2023. An Emergency Hygiene Prohibition Notice was served in August 2022 to prohibit the business selling food for human consumption. During monitoring visits made to the premises, it was found that food was being sold in contravention to the Order which could have caused an imminent risk to health.

School Appeals Panel Members: Somerset Council is looking for new volunteers to become Independent Panel Members for School Appeals. Independent Panels hear and decide on admission, exclusion and transport issues for maintained schools and Academy schools in Somerset. A panel meets when a parent or school lodges an appeal against a decision related to a child's education. These panels are independent of Somerset Council and the governing bodies of the school. The Panels meet online so there is no need to travel, and applications are welcome from across Somerset. No qualifications are needed and full training is provided. For more information, and to apply, please visit www.assemblevolunteers.somerset.gov.uk/opportunities/50638-independent-school-appeals-panels-member-2023-07-17 or email neil.milne@somerset.gov.uk