

# Parish Council of Coleford

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## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Present** Cllr Ham, (Chairman presiding), Allen, Banks, Evans and Paterson.

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

### 1. **Public Forum**

There were no points raised.

### 2. **Resignations and Co-Option of Councillors**

There were now 2 Councillor vacancies. The Chair asked that letters of thanks be sent to both Councillors for the work they have done during their time as a Councillor.

All Councillors were asked to spread the word about the role of the Councillor and put them in touch with the Clerk who will be able to answer any other questions that they might have.

*Action: Clerk to draft letter of thanks and advertise vacancies. Cllrs to spread the word*

### 3. **Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)**

Cllr Bell, Douglas-Burke, Barrett, Moulding, Pearce, Townsend and Somerset Cllr Clarke all sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

### 4. **Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting**

There were none.

### 5. **Approve the minutes from the meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

The Clerk had circulated both sets of minutes to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Evans suggested an amendment to the minutes for the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, namely minute ref 1.5 which stated 'It was reported that the exit and entrance signs at the Royal British Legion car park has been removed'. It was suggested that it should be amended to read 'It was reported that the exit and entrance signs at the Royal British Legion car park has broken and the other one is not visible'. It was agreed that the amendment should be made. All Councillors then agreed that the minutes were accurate and should be signed by the Chair.

*Vote: 5 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstentions*

### 6. **Actions arising from the minutes**

All actions had been completed or would feature later in the agenda 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*

- Cllr Allen to seek specification and quotes to improve the footpath between Mendip Vale and Farley Dell.

***Action: It was agreed that Cllr Ham would ask a contractor to make a temporary repair to reduce the trip hazard and the Clerk would seek quotes to tarmac the path. Agenda item once the information has been received***

## 7. Reports

7.1 Somerset Council – A report will be circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Ham also explained that:

- Winter Fuel payment – Somerset Councillors have written to Government asking that they reconsider stopping the winter fuel payment
- There is currently a leadership campaign for the Conservative party and also for a leader at Somerset Council
- Cllr Ham and Cllr Clarke have written a strongly worded letter to the Chief Executive of Somerset Council complaining about the inefficiencies of the Planning department. They have been invited to attend a meeting to discuss their concerns.
- All local quarries have held their liaison meetings over the last few weeks.
- Porr have pulled out of the project due to take place at Leighton where they were going to make the concrete products for the HS2 project.

7.2 PCSO – The crime report for Coleford had been shared with all Councillors. It showed that during the last month there had been 1 case of arson and criminal damage and 1 case of violence against the person. The next drop-in session will be run at the Hub on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024 from 10am until 11am.

7.3 Climate Action Group – No report had been received.

7.4 Coleford Conservation Volunteers – A report had been submitted which stated:

The grant application to the Halecombe Quarry Community Fund had been successful. The bid concentrated on raising funds for another Autumn round of wild flower planting and seeding at the Butterfly Bank, with a small addition to top up funds for the project to refresh planters around the village with colourful wild flowers.

Wildflower plants and seeds have been ordered and they are proposing Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October (10am to 1pm) for a clearing and planting session at the Bank and around some shaded edges of the Lower Playing Field.

On the Bank they would like to clear back one or two grassy areas before planting, to give the new plants more chance to get established. There will also be seeding.

The team working on the native tree nursery project has also been busy. Several work sessions have been held, to organise the plot at the new Vobster Allotments and set up some seed planting beds there. Seeds are now being collected locally. A load of compost made from Somerset's recycled garden waste has been ordered, to arrive on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 8.30am. Volunteers are sought to help shovel this into position.

Other future volunteer dates include:

- Winter maintenance at the Butterfly Bank – the usual clearance job, probably in January. Date to be announced.
- Spring Working Party on Village Planters – a second phase, following work on the planters opposite the Surgery. Date to be announced.

## 8. Planning Applications

There were none.

## 9. Planning updates

9.1 Update on applications

The Clerk had shared an updated spreadsheet showing status of previous applications.

An email had been received from Andre Sestini the Somerset Principal Planning Policy Officer confirming that Somerset Council had submitted its Limited Update of Mendip Local Plan Part II for examination on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Details of the appointed inspector, programme officer and progress of the examination will be updated online at: [Mendip Local Plan Part II Limited Update Examination \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/mendip-local-plan-part-ii-limited-update-examination) No further comments can be made at this stage. The programme officer to the examination may contact parties who made representations at the publication stage held in July 2024 in due course.

9.2 Update on 2019/2345/OTS – 63 dwellings at Anchor Road, Coleford  
After consideration it was agreed that there should be no further action at this stage.

**10. Discuss the email received from Somerset Council dated 11<sup>th</sup> July regarding grass cutting of Somerset owned land from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025 and agree a response**

It was agreed that the Clerk would ask our current grass cutting contractor to quote for cutting the land owned by Somerset Council so that this could be considered at the November meeting.

*Action: Clerk to seek quote. Agenda item for November*

It was agreed that the Clerk will present the charges provided by Somerset Council relating to emptying the Parish Council owned bins for consideration as part of the budget process for 2025/26.

*Action: Clerk to seek quote. Agenda item for November*

**11. Highways including:**

11.1 Councillor update - Cllr Townsend did not attend but provided the following report:

Items reported to County Roads -

- Highbury St - pothole just below Eagle by new house
- Beacon View - Loose kerbstone
- Dark Lane - safety implications as a diversion when Vobster closed
- Mells - pothole on left coming west off straight just above crossroads
- Kings Head bridge - stuck HGV, safety inspection of bridge requested

Other issues:

- Anchor Road - Noted that a pair of vehicle-counting cables had appeared across the road north of Upper Merryfield
- Local Community Network – It was mentioned that a new accident database is being created. Its primary purpose appeared to be in the context of pointing to locations where safety improvements are needed. Cllr Townsend raised the principle that the database should also be used as a planning tool. To support this, he has sent a copy of the Brochure which was created for the Gladman opposition which highlighted 31 incidents on Charmborough Lane, none of which appeared on any database because no-one was injured. Photos of the Kings Head HGV incident and the recent Charmborough Lane HGV -v- White Van collision was also sent. It was suggested that we keep close to this new database.

11.2 Update on cars parked at Orchard Close parking bays – The PCSO has been in touch highlighting that there have been complaints from residents regarding abandoned vehicles parked at Orchard Close and on Highbury Street. As the Parish Council owns the parking bays at Orchard Close it is down to the Parish Council to remove them.

*Action: Clerk to consider information on removing cars provided by PCSO*

11.3 Consider AutoSpeedWatch (ASW) and whether to purchase

The following quote had been obtained: ASW roadside unit £779 which included 1 yr data, 3 signs at £175.80 and fixing bands £19.60 which totals £974.40. There will be an annual ongoing charge for data connectivity of £179.00.

The Clerk gave a report on the results Holcombe had obtained with the ASW unit. The Chair will be advertising in the Community Magazine that the unit is gathering data and that the PCSO has confirmed they will visit the top / repeat offenders. It is hoped this will have a positive affect on reducing speed in Holcombe.

It was agreed that the Council should monitor the impact the unit has in Holcombe before making a decision.

**Action: Agenda item for December**

- 11.4 Report of any new issues  
There were none.

**12. Update on Allotments including:**

- 12.1 Update on compostable toilet – Cllr Pearce reported that the volunteer has fitted the toilet door lock and is in the process of fitting the door closure. The lino has given some problems since very difficult to cut. It was agreed that Cllr Ham would ask the supplier if they could provide a contractor to fit it.

**Action: Cllr Ham to arrange fitter**

Cllr Pearce has finished the vent system, installed the guttering and the urinal drain. The fittings for the urinal itself are all done it just needs to be put on place once the lino is down.

- 12.2 Consider rules and safety measures for ponds on allotment plots  
This will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for November meeting**

**13. Review Footpath Warden reports**

The reports for footpaths in both the North and South of the village have been received and circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk confirmed that they had been sent to Somerset Rights of Way for them to action repairs or improvements.

**14. Finance**

- 14.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation – Carried over to the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for next meeting**

- 14.2 Review 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget Review – Carried over to the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for next meeting**

- 14.3 Consider quotes received from Utility Aid for electricity and water at Highbury Playing Field - Quotes have not been received.

- 14.4 Accounts approved for payments –  
The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts - Clerks Expenses	£ 35.00
HMRC	£102.67
Festive Lights Ltd – Christmas lights	£299.87
Paul Gilson - Footpath Warden North Summer Report	£ 50.00
Alison Carter - Footpath Warden South Summer Report	£ 50.00
A F Denning – Earth Clamp for generator	£ 90.00

It was proposed that all payments should be paid.

**Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention**

**15. Update on the Health and Wellbeing grant application**

Carried forward to the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item for the November meeting.**

**16. Consider whether to host a warm space this winter**

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact village groups to consult / assess whether there is a need for a warm space.

*Action: Clerk to contact village groups. Agenda item for the next meeting.*

**17. Discuss and agree the Christmas Light switch on**

It was agreed that the Parish Council would supply the Christmas lights and the tree to the Royal British Legion (RBL) committee to host a ‘Light switch on’ event on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The RBL will be responsible for decorating the tree and ensuring that a risk assessment and insurance is in place for the event.

*Action: Clerk to notify the RBL. Cllr Ham to supply tree prior to the event.*

**18. Update on the memorial bench which was burnt at Highbury playing Field**

The Clerk has provided a quote for a similar bench which has been approved by the family. It is understood that the PCSO is in contact with the family of the perpetrator to cover the cost of the replacement bench.

The Clerk has arranged for the site to be cleared.

**19. Meetings to attend**

30/09/24 @ 7pm - Shepton Mallet LCN. Cllr Townsend and Ham to attend.

04/10/24 @1.45pm - @ The Hub. Cllr Ham, Pearce, Allen met with representatives of Pennys to discuss the conditions attached to the approval of the pitch levelling. Cllr Ham confirmed that after discussion those present were content that Nick Dunn’s proposal was sound and agreed that they should be submitted to the Sport England and then the planning office. It is hoped that this would be accepted by the Planning officer which would mean that the work could then progress without further delay.

31/10/24 @ 7pm – Cranmore Memorial Hall. Presentation by Paul Elliston of Somerset Rivers Authority. Presentation on flooding generally but also what the future holds and what we can / should do now to lessen the effects of storms.

**20. Correspondence**

Spread the word about the Small Grants. Deadline for applications 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024.

Somerset Council – Basic allowances for Parish Councillors. No further action.

**21. Date of Next Meetings:**

23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2024	Planning meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.20hrs