

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 27th November 2024

Present Cllr Ham, (Chairman presiding), Banks, Evans, Moulding, Pearce and Townsend.

In attendance 2 member of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

1.1 It was reported that the finger post at the junction of Charmborough Lane and Charlton Road was missing the finger for Coleford. Cllr Ham said that he believed it was still there but was hidden by vegetation.

1.2 A fallen tree on the road from Vobster to Coleford had resulted in a stump sticking out in to the carriageway.

Action: Clerk to investigate both issues and report to Somerset Highways.

2. Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

Cllr Allen, Bell, Paterson and Somerset Cllr Clarke all sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Resignations and Co-Option of Councillors

The Chair reported that Cllr Barrett had resigned. This meant that there were still 2 vacancies. Councillors were asked to spread the word about the role and put any potential candidates in touch with the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to notify Somerset Council of the resignation.

5. Planning Applications

5.1 2024/1898/REM - Land South Of Suncroft, Lipyeate Cross To Luckington Cross, Coleford Reserved matters approval for details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference 2019/2345/OTS (Application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved for the erection of up to 63 dwellings).

It was explained that the compliance matrix relating to the reserved matters did not easily relate to the documents submitted, which made it difficult to establish if the reserved matters had been satisfied. Free of charge advice had been sought from Context Planning who had said that in their opinion there was case for the application to be refused. It was agreed that a quote would be sought from Context Planning to establish how much they would charge to act on behalf of the Parish Council to respond to the application.

After discussion it was agreed that a response would be submitted before the end of the November highlighting to the Planning Officer some of the key areas of concern.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention (Somerset Councillor)

It was mentioned that the site notices had not been displayed in visible locations and the Planning Office had only consulted with the neighbours despite Simon Trafford confirming that everyone that responded to the original consultation would be consulted.

Action: Clerk to respond to the planning officer. Quote to be sought from Context Planning to act on behalf of the Parish Council

5.2 2024/0163/OUT Outline application for the erection of up to 75 dwellings, associated infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity enhancements, all matters reserved except for access from Anchor Road

It was reported that application ref 2024/0163/OUT, outline application for the erection of up to 75 dwellings, on Anchor Road had been refused by the planning officer on the basis of:

1. The local housing needs of Coleford have already been met during the current plan period, and the site's distant location from larger towns would result in significant harmful travel patterns.
2. Moderate harm to local identity and distinctiveness would arise from partial hedgerow loss, translocation, and urbanisation.
3. Incomplete information over the capacity of Coleford's sewage treatment works could lead to environmental pollution and harm aquatic life due to potential discharge of untreated or partially treated sewage.
4. The applicant has not confirmed consent from necessary third parties for an acceptable surface water discharge location, thus a viable outfall location has not been demonstrated, and therefore permitted the development would risk unacceptable surface water flooding.

The applicant would have 6 months in which to appeal.

Cllr Pearce arrived 19.19hrs

5.3 Appeal APP/E3335/D/24/3354696 - 2024/1278/HSE - 4 Mendip View, Coleford

The Council had been notified of the abovementioned appeal. No further action required

5.4 024/1708/CLE at The Barn Common Farm, Coleford

The had been notified of the abovementioned Certificate of Lawfulness of existing use for information only. No further action required.

6. Update on the bridge repair near the Kings Head

A resident had asked for an update on when the bridge would be repaired. The Clerk confirmed that she had written to the Somerset Highways asking for an update.

7. Consider quotes received for electricity and water at Highbury Playing Field

This would be considered by Cllr Ham and Allen and a decision made at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting.

8. Approve standing order for Clerk pay and pension

The Clerk had shared the calculation generated by PATA Payroll showing the new rate of totals payable to the Clerk and the Pension fund after the National Salary award which was agreed at the previous meeting. The new standing orders were approved for Somerset Council Pension fund at £353.88 and salary at £1,152.90.

9. Consider Budget /Precept for 2025/26

The Clerk had circulated the draft budget for 2024/26 prior to the meeting. During the meeting Councillors considered each line of the budget. Grass cutting forms a large proportion of the budget and if the Council was to take on the responsibility for cutting the grass on the Somerset owned land it could cost up to £7,000 on top of the current contract. It was agreed that a working party made up of Cllr Moulding, Swords, Ham, Banks and Evans, would be formed to visit the sites and consider which should be cut and which could be left.

It was noted that some of the residents living in Aster homes are paying a contribution towards the ground maintenance alongside residents who now privately own neighbouring properties.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

Clerk to write to Aster Homes and Somerset to ask for an update on whether residents will continue to pay if Somerset stop cutting the grass. Working party to review Somerset owned land to decide which will require cutting

Earmarked reserves should be spent before the end of the financial year.

It was agreed that a finance meeting would be held on Friday 3rd January 2025 to review the 3rd quarter budget, forecast and the budget for 2025/26. Reserves to be included in the reports.

Action: Clerk to arrange Finance meeting 03/01/25.

10. Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts- Back pay due (National salary award)	£337.28
Somerset Council – Pension fund (National salary award)	£ 93.77

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

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

11. Discuss and agree contractors for:

11.1 Installation of fence at Highbury playing field car park

The Clerk presented an updated quote for the fencing and labour to install the Armco fencing at the car park at Highbury playing field, which had been previously agreed in September 2023. Materials were now £1,150 plus labour of £1400 making a total of £ 2550. It was proposed by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Banks that the quote from Steve Pitt should be accepted and the project completed before the end of the year.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to notify the contractor and supplier that the project will progress.

11.2 Repair the trip hazard at Mendip Vale

The Clerk presented two quotes to repair the trip hazard at the start of the footpath which joins Mendip Vale. After consideration it was proposed that the quote for £150.00 received from Steve Pitt should be accepted on the basis that the work would be completed before the end of the year.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to notify the contractor and supplier that the project will progress.

11.3 Relocate the gate at Beacon View

The Clerk presented a quote to relocate the gate at the entrance to Beacon View. It was noted that the gate currently installed was too big to be installed at the new entrance. Cllr Ham will source a new gate of the correct size to be swapped for the existing gate. After consideration it was proposed that the quote for £200 received from Steve Pitt should be accepted on the basis that the work would be completed before the end of the year.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to notify the contractor and supplier that the project will progress.

12. Update on Coleford Menshed

Cllr Pearce had visited both Wedmore and Frome Mens shed and Cllr Townsend had visited the Frome shed. They were impressed with the set-up of the sheds and the wellbeing benefits that the sheds were bringing to their respective communities.

The next step was to hold a BBQ or breakfast meeting to host the concept of the new Coleford Shed to garner community interest. It was agreed that this would take place on the morning of 1st March. The event will be publicised on social media, the notice boards and parish magazine.

Action: Agenda item for the January meeting

13. Correspondence

10/11/24 - Request for funding towards the Commonwealth War Memorial at Taunton. Councillors agreed in principle.

Action Agenda item for December meeting

24/11/24 - Somerset Council – Somerset Validation Consultation. Shared with Councillors. Agreed no action required.

19/11/24 – A non-resident of the Parish (not domiciled in the UK) was noted with interest.;

14. Date of Next Meetings:

11th December 2024 Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.50hrs