

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 28th May 2025

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding), Banks, Bell, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Fisher, Moulding, Paterson, Pearce, and Townsend.

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

1. Public Forum

- 1.1 It was noted that Charmborough Rd, Anchor Rd and Brewery Rd had been closed during recent street light repairs. It was disappointing that no prior notice had been given.
- 1.2 Concern was expressed that the verge at the junction of Preachers Vale junction had become overgrown at the front and side of the house and was now obscuring the road sign. It is understood that the land was owned by Somerset Council. It was agreed that the Clerk would request that they cut back the grass and bushes.

Action: Cllr Banks to send photos. Clerk to contact Idverde to request that it be cut

- 1.3 The Chair thanked Cllr Allen for his hard work at the allotments where he had recently installed additional water tanks and continued to help maintain the system ensuring the water supply was available.

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

Cllrs Allen and Swords sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

Cllr Townsend declared an interest in Agenda item 6, the Rainier appeal.

4. Co-option of Councillors

The Clerk had shared an application from John Fisher prior to the meeting, expressing an interest to become a Parish Councillor. John had previously been a member of Coleford Parish Council and was keen to return now that he had more time available. Councillors voted unanimously in favour of co-opting John onto the council.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Cllr Fisher completed the consent to co-option and the register of interests form which the Clerk would send to the monitoring officer at Somerset Council.

Action: Clerk to send the paperwork to Somerset Council a set up new email address.

John joined the Councillors but would not vote at tonight's meeting.

5. 2025/0836/HSE - 2 Tower View Church Street Coleford Frome Somerset

Proposed two storey extension to existing dwelling

All Councillors had the opportunity to consider the plans prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Townsend and seconded by Cllr Bell that the decision be left to the planning officer

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to submit the decision with Somerset Planning office

6. Planning updates including the Rainier Appeal

The planning appeal will take place on 10th and 11th of June at Council Chambers, Shepton Mallet. The Parish Council agreed that the hearing would be promoted on the website and social media to encourage parishioners to attend to show the strength of feeling against the development.

Action: Words to be agreed for use on social media to encourage Parishioners to attend

A draft statement had been circulated to all Councillors which would be presented to the Planning Inspectorate. It was agreed that more information would be included highlighting the number of sewage overflows into the river during 2024 which totaled 1441.5 hours of overflow from the main works and further hours from the Kings Head storage tank. All into the River Mells. Wessex Water had already stated that they will not be able to improve the system until at least 2035.

Action: Clerk to update the draft and share with all Councillors

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to our MP highlighting the issues and asking for her support.

Action: Clerk to send letter to Anna Sabine MP

7. Finance

The Clerk confirmed that the internal audit had been completed and section 1 – the Internal Audit Report 2024/25 had been signed. The Internal Auditor had requested that any fee due should be given by way of a donation to The Great Western Air Ambulance Charity. It was agreed that a sum of £75 would be sent to the Charity and a letter of thanks sent to the Auditor confirming that this had been donated.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained

Action: Clerk to send letter of thanks

7.1 Consider & approve section 1 Audit - Annual Governance statement 2024/25

The Clerk had signed and circulated section 1 of the Annual Governance statement for consideration prior to the meeting. The Clerk then read out the questions with Councillors answering yes to questions 1 to 8 and not applicable to question 9. It was agreed that the Chair should sign the statement.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained

7.2 Consider and approve section 2 Audit - Accounting statements 2024/25

The Clerk then read out Section 2 the Accounting statements for 2024/25 which had been completed using the figures for the previous financial year ending 2024 and year ending 2025. All Councillors present acknowledged that the page was completed correctly and agreed that the Chair and the Clerk should sign off the section at the earliest opportunity.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained

7.1 Consider grant request to cover hire of benches and tables for Colefest

It was proposed by Cllr Banks and seconded by Cllr Paterson that a donation of £100 should be made to Coleford Rocks to help with the cost of the benches and tables for Colefest taking place on 28th July.

Action: Clerk to ask for bank details for cheque to be signed at the June meeting

7.2 Review and accept the insurance renewal with Clear Insurance Management Ltd

The Clerk said that the renewal quote of £1,121.53 had been received but she was waiting for a quote for a 3-year agreement which should be lower. After discussion it was agreed that that it would be beneficial to have the 3-year deal and the Clerk should accept this and send the cheque if lower than the renewal deal.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained

Action: Clerk to accept quote if lower and send cheque

7.3 Payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

Clear Insurance Management – Annual Parish Council Insurance	£1,083.80
Read Agri-services – Connection for Goodeaves rainwater harvesting	£ 60.60
Vickie Watts – Covers for water containers	£ 121.63
Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (Donation for Internal Audit)	£ 75.00

8. **Discuss the creation of a Coleford Emergency plan**

The Clerk had circulated the Emergency plan template to all Councillors. After discussion it was agreed that Councillors Moulding, Townsend, Patterson and Fisher will form a working party to create a first draft for consideration at the July meeting.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstained

Action: Working party to meet and prepare a first draft. Agenda item for July

9. **Date of Next Meetings:**

11 th June 2025	Parish Council meeting
25 th June 2025	Planning meeting

The meeting ended at 20.50 hrs