

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 9th July 2025

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

In attendance Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke and no members of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

1.1 PCSO Will Mortimer confirmed in his report that he had successfully secured a Tree Preservation Order on the oak tree located at The Cottage, Stockhill

1.2 The Clerk said that there appeared to be a leak at Coleford Playing field near to the Willow dome, which had been reported to Bristol Water.

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

Cllr Allen, Banks, Bell, Moulding and PCSO Will Mortimer sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Approve the minutes from the meetings held on the 11th June 2025

The Clerk had circulated the draft minutes for both meetings to all Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Evans that the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and should be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

5. Actions arising from the minutes

All actions were completed or would be dealt with as agenda items during the meeting apart from:

- Discuss and agree whether to pay cost of training for the Strimmer Scheme
The Clerk outlined that Somerset Council will support Coleford Parish Council if we have a volunteer who is happy to complete the brush cutter training at the Parish Councils expense (Approx £160 + VAT). Once trained the volunteer would be covered by Somerset Councils insurance and would be able to share the strimmer currently held by a volunteer in Holcombe. It was agreed that the Clerk would discuss the scheme with the Coleford volunteer and the Holcombe volunteer to establish if this is something that could work for Coleford Parish Council

Action: Clerk to progress. Agenda item for future meeting

- New dog waste bin

Cllr Allen said he had been approached by member of the public who would like to see a dog waste bin installed at the bottom of Beacon View.

Action: Cllr Allen to send map showing the location for consideration. Agenda item for the next meeting

- Street light review:
Cllr Townsend to check Lipyeate down to Farley Dell
Cllr Paterson to check Farley Dell and Anchor Road from Farley Dell to the Co-op
Cllr Allen to check Mendip Way and Beacon View
Cllr Fisher to check Highbury St from the Co-op to bottom of Highbury playing Field
Cllr Evans to check Lawrence Road, Roman Way, Preachers Way
Cllr Douglas-Burke to check from bottom of Highbury Playing field to Stockhill
Cllr Moulding to check Church Street and High St

Action: Councillors to complete the review and send results to the Clerk for submission

6. Co-option of Councillors

There were no applicants to consider.

7. Reports

7.1 Somerset Council report

The monthly report had been circulated and would be displayed on the parish website.

Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke arrived later in the meeting and gave the following report

- Boundary review closes on the 11th August 2025
- National Planning Policy Framework changes are being proposed. Any developments under 10 houses will not go to the planning board but will be decided at officer level. The Parish Council will always be consulted but the Somerset Councillor will not be consulted directly.
- The Volunteer Highway Scheme will require training on each area.
- Please provide details on any enforcement issues to Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke who is collating details and taking them to the Enforcement team to press for action.
- LCN meeting to take place on the 21st August 2025 @ Mendip Council offices. Somerset Highways will be attending Cllr Barry Clarke has requested a meeting with the Economic Future team to discuss the future of our area.
- The Internal Auditor has reported that there are several areas for concern including procurement and the handling of capital spend.
- A temporary Section 51 Officer is now in place.
- The Council is about to embark on spending 3 million on reviewing the salaries and structure.

7.2 PCSO

During the last month there were 1 x Arson, 1 x Burglary, 1 x Non recordable, 2 x Sexual offence crimes, 3 x Theft, 2 x Vehicle Offences recorded. Patrols in the area have been increased after a number of ASB, being reported at the football club and stock hill court .

7.3 Climate Action Group

Cllr Moulding did not attend or provide a report but the Chair explained that on Saturday 12th July there would be a special screening of award-winning films from the Frome International Climate Film Festival. They will take place at the following times:

- 2:30pm – Family-friendly short films
- 4:00pm – Inspiring climate stories for all
- 6:00–8:30pm – Main Feature Film

8. Planning Applications

There were none.

9. Planning updates

- 7.1 The Rainier appeal APP/E3335/W/25///3358746 has been allowed. Cllr Townsend, Ham and the Clerk to consider possible inaccuracies and refer to Wessex Water Authority as appropriate.

Action: Clerk to work with Councillors to produce the letter

- 9.2 It was noted that the Gladman application agreed date of 30th June 2025 has now been extended to 19th September 2025. It was agreed that a letter would be sent challenging the date.

Action: Clerk to work with Councillors to produce the letter

10. Highways including:

10.1 Councilor update

Cllr Townsend gave the following report:

- The long defective sections along Cherry Gardens Lane beyond Owls Nest, and also along Dark Lane south from Luckington Cross via the Somerset Council website.
- Repair work done at the Charlton Road/Charmborough Lane junction and also at Anchor Rd/Brewery Lane have been completed.
- Somerset Council website does not recognise Cherry Gardens Lane or Charmborough Lane. The Council have tried before but can we have another go at Highways to get them to recognise both correct names. The confusion with Anchor Road does not help when trying to explain our issues with Highways.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

10.2 Report of any new issues

- Raised kerb stone in Beacon View. Exact location to be reported to Cllr Townsend
- Councillors to inspect streetlights for issues as advised last month.

Action: Cllr Townsend to report the kerb stone and streetlights

- The Enhanced Highway Maintenance Pilot Update and information on the Volunteer Highway Maintenance program had both been circulated to all Councillors

11. Review Policies

The Clerk had circulated the following policies which were based on the models provided by Somerset Association of Local Council in conjunction with the National Association of Local Councils, to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

- 11.1 Standing Orders – It was proposed by Cllr Douglas-Burke and seconded by Cllr Ham that Section 3, Meetings Generally, point x on page 11, after the statement ‘A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours’ it should say ‘accept in special circumstances where it could be extended by vote.’

Vote 8 for, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

- 11.2 Financial regulations – It was agreed that the document should be adopted.

Vote 8 for, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Online banking to be an agenda item for the next meeting

- 11.3 Tree Management policy – It was agreed that 2 small amendments be made and that the policy should be adopted.

Vote 8 for, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

12. Consider the 1st Draft of the Emergency Plan

The working party are considering the plan at a meeting on the 14th July. Draft to be presented at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

13. Discuss and agree grass cutting of Somerset owned land

Somerset Council have agreed that 8 cuts will be completed during this year, which is more than last year. It was agreed that this will be monitored and if .

14. Discuss and agree whether to progress with the Strimmer scheme

This will be discussed at the next meeting as an agenda item.

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

15. Consider quote to renovate the Coleford Village sign

Cllr Ham has asked a contractor to provide a quote to remove the lacquer and restore the sign.

Action: Agenda item for future meeting

16. Update from the Coleford Sheddars – Consider projects for them to work on

The following list was discussed as possible options:

- Restore the rocking horse at Coleford playing field
- Renovate the old gates at the entrance to Coleford Playing field
- Make a new notice board for outside the Hub
- Bench renovations – start with the ones at Cllr Ham's farm
- Make bird boxes for the Parish
- Make timber containers to create a floral entrance to the village (4 roads)

It was agreed that this list would be shared and discussed with the Coleford Sheddars to establish if any of them would be of interest. There would need to be discussion around materials and expenses before commencing any of the above.

Action: Clerk to discuss with the Coleford Sheddars

17. Decide whether to host an event at the Vobster allotments during National Allotment Week 11-17th August

Clerk to liaise with the agreed working party of Cllr Ham, Moulding, Allen and Swords to plan the event.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting date

18. Update on the water supply at Goodeaves allotments

The rainwater harvesting containers were now linked but will not fill until there was sufficient rain. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask a neighbour if they would consider filling the container with water for an agreed fee.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the neighbour

19. Consider quote to create .gov email and website

No action required.

20. Consider options for Community Transport in Coleford

It was agreed that Cllr Ham will arrange a meeting with Nataliya Wills the Local Community Network Link Officer for Somerset Council along with Cllr Douglas-Burke and Cllr Moulding.

Action: Cllr Ham to arrange meeting

21. Finance

21.1 Agree bank reconciliation

The Clerk completed the bank reconciliation which Cllr Paterson had checked and found to be in order.

21.2 Consider signing up to 12 months of unlimited GDPR support from the Breakthrough Communications £495 + VAT (inc £200 discount)

It was agreed that the Council would purchase the GDPR toolkit for £495 + VAT to ensure that the Council is GDPR compliant

Vote 7 for, 0 Against and 1 Abstention

Action: Clerk to accept the offer from Breakthrough Communications for the GDPT Toolkit

21.3 Notification that EDF direct Debit will be increasing from £16 to £33.04 from the 10th July
Clerk to review the contract and establish why the direct debit needs to be doubled.

Action: Clerk to review the contract

21.4 1st Quarter budget review year end March 2026

Clerk to update the forecast and share with all Councillors prior to the next meeting when it will be reviewed.

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

21.5 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts – Clerks Expenses	£ 95.91
V Watts – Screwfix – Pump for allotment	<u>£ 79.97</u>
	<u>£175.88</u>
HMRC – National Insurance & Tax due	£177.19
Somerset Playing Field Association	£ 15.00
Somerset Association Local Councils -Training	£ 30.00

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Townsend that the payments should be made.
The cheques were signed by Cllr Ham, Evans and Townsend

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

21.6 Notification of monthly payments made by Standing Order and Direct Debit:

The following invoices are paid during the month by standing order and direct debit:

V Watts – Clerks Salary	£1527.48
Somerset Council - Clerks Pension	£1152.90
LSJ Gardening Services – Ground maintenance	£ 353.88
EDF – Electricity Supply Changing rooms	£ 33.04

22. **Meetings to attend / attended**

07/07/25 LCN – Cllr Townsend attended

15/07/25 @ 6.30pm – Community Solution Seekers, Health & Well Being – Cllr Douglas-Burke to attend

18/07/25 from 10am to 3pm – Cloudy IT on the use of AI in Local Government

23. **Correspondence**

02/07/25 – Pennys update on Leveling of the playing field. Waiting for an appropriate site

03/07/25 – Anna Sabine MP regarding protecting local voices in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill

24. **Date of Next Meetings:**

23rd July 2025 Planning meeting

13th August 2025 Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.49hrs