

Parish Council of Coleford

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Newsletter for September 2021

New Councillor

At our recent meeting we were able to co-opt Mr Paul Bell as Parish Councillor to bring us back to a full Council. Having lived in the village for 13 years Paul is keen to become more involved with village life and wants to contribute towards making a difference to parishioners lives. We really hope that Paul will enjoy the challenge.

Small Grants 2021

The window for applications for Parish Council grant funding is now open. If your village group could benefit from a small grant to help with the cost of equipment, services or specific work to benefit members, then please download a form from the parish website <https://www.colefordsomerset.info/small-grants> The deadline for applications is the 1st November 2021.



Planning Application

2021/1414/FUL - Erection of a Dwelling and associated works.
Land South Of Anchor Road, Coleford, Radstock.

Coleford Parish Council was consulted on the above application and decided that the decision should be left to the Planning Officer, subject to resolution over concerns about the safety of the exit onto Anchor Rd and also vehicles crossing the footpath, which cross the site entrance. This should be discussed with the Ward Councillors.

Planning updates

Appeal APP/Q3305/W/20/3265459 Application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved for the erection of up to 63 dwellings Appeal Location: Land Off Anchor Road, Lipyeate Cross to Luckington Cross, Coleford, Frome, Somerset, Appellant: Gladman Application Number: 2019/2345/OTS

The Gladman appeal on the 63 houses at Coleford was held virtually on 18th August. Mendip were only able to defend the appeal on the basis of the refusal, the Harm to the Countryside, our planning consultant supported Mendip's position and also presented the planning policy reasons for refusal. We also argued for refusal mainly on the basis of Highways and Sustainability. There was disappointment that the Inspector insisted on doing his site visit unaccompanied as we wanted to highlight the Highway issues to him on the ground. It was hoped that he had listened to and read all of the representations. The result could take anything from 3 weeks to 3 months.



The Local Plan Part 2; the Inspector's final report has been fact checked and there are no changes for Coleford. It missed Cabinet on 6th September but should be presented on 4th October and we have asked for an Extraordinary meeting of Full Council a couple of weeks later to agree its formal adoption

Appeal APP/Q3305/W/21/3270276 Erection of a single detached residential dwelling, garage and associated development (updated information received). Springwater Farm, Anchor Road, Coleford, Frome, Somerset, BA3 5GX

The Council had submitted on 1st September 2021 a response to the Planning Inspector repeating the concern expressed by Cllrs regarding the original planning application. A key factor was the lack of visibility to Ward Cllrs of financial accounts as requested on a Confidential basis to allow the financial viability of the enterprise to be assessed.

Highways including:

Councillor Townsend reported on the surface dressing on Charlton Rd, mud clearance from the middle of Dark Lane, a pothole repaired at Lipyeate Cross and further repairs in progress along Stoke Bottom.

There were road marking issues at Preachers Vale/Lawrence Rd/Roman Way, the Farley Dell to Anchor Rd junction, along Common Lane and the 30mph markings on Anchor Rd. It was agreed that this would be taken up with Somerset Highways at his meeting with Sara Davis.

Reports of dangerous parking at Underhill, Church Street. It was noted that there were three aspects to this issue, the exit from the old Rose and Crown car park, the visibility problem for those going uphill onto Church St, and the footpath exit from the grassed area. Cllr Ham will add to his agenda with Highways.

A letter had been received regarding HGV access to Charmborough Lane. The Parish Council and the overwhelming majority of objectors to the Gladman application had raised this. A possible One Way system had been discussed with Holcombe Parish Council and they were strongly opposed. Restricting the access for HGVs to the Vobster end would give problems over 2 narrow bridges, the long bend by the Vobster Inn and the restricted width through Stockhill and Goodeaves and past the Eagle.

Jubilee Central Weekend June 2022



A public meeting was held at the Hub on the 15th September to discuss how the village can celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. National events will be held from Thursday 2nd June to Sunday 5th June 2022. Some of the ideas put forward to encourage the Parishioners to get together were:

- an ecumenical service on morning of Sunday 5th of celebration of the Queens reign to be held in the Church with a power point presentation
- Picnic at Highbury Playing Field with live music – everyone bringing their own food to celebrate together. If the weather is poor, families will be encouraged to do the same at home in their homes
- Light a beacon on the Thursday 2nd June
- Mark the occasion with a commemorative mug or similar
- A royal themed art competition to be displayed over the weekend
- A fancy dress competition and procession for children
- Plant a tree to mark the occasion
- A royal themed Murder Mystery event put on by Coleford Theatre Group

The next meeting will take place Wednesday 3rd November @ the Hub at 7pm. We really hope that you will come along to help shape the events to mark the occasion.

Date of Next Meetings:

13th October 2021 – Monthly meeting

27th October 2021 – Planning meeting



If you have any issues that you would like to bring to the Parish Council's attention please contact the Clerk on 01749 880428 or email clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com Check out the website www.colefordsomerset.info

Philip Ham

Somerset County Council Report

Coronavirus infection rates: As at 29th August the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 33,812 (up from 26,526 on 25th June) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 811. The rate per 100,000 stands at 459.1 (206.9) for Somerset with Mendip at 358.2 (234.5), Sedgemoor at 673.0 (195.7), South Somerset 410.5 (214.4) and SW&T at 417.1 (187.0). The number of total deaths across the County is currently 11% below the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 0.9 and 1.2.

Infection rates in Somerset are now amongst the highest in England. It is therefore important even for those who have had both jabs to remember to observe Social Distancing and to Ventilate indoor areas at all times.

Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline: A single phone number continues to be available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. **0300 790 6275**, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm.

Vaccination programme roll-out: Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 94.5% of the adult population having had one dose of vaccine and 84.6% having had both doses. Work continues to encourage further take up particularly amongst younger adults and a real focus on ensuring the second vaccine to this group.

Local Government Reorganisation: Following the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset work has now commenced to refine the transition and implementation programme. The four District Councils and Somerset County Council are working closely with MHCLG to implement the decision. A recent request from Government to look at a maximum of circa 85 Councillors on the new Council has also meant that a review of Divisional/Ward boundaries is now being undertaken. In addition, the impact of a May 2022 Unitary election on Town and Parish Councils who are not due to elect until 2023 is also under consideration with the views of these Councils being sought on the options available. It is expected that statutory orders will be laid before Parliament in the late Autumn and a vesting date of the new authority as April 2023.

Somerset Medal for Community Groups: Groups, teams and other volunteers will be presented with the Somerset Medal on Wednesday 15 September at Taunton Rugby Club after being recognised as some of Somerset's many unsung coronavirus heroes. The Somerset Medal was launched by Somerset County Council to say a heartfelt thank-you to the best of the best. The first individual winners were announced on Somerset Day with a second round of nominations opened up to groups and teams.

£5,000 Rural Business Grants: Grants of up to £5,000 are now available to help businesses in rural parts of Somerset bounce back after the coronavirus pandemic. The grants (up to 80% of project costs) are available to assist service businesses in rural areas to help them move forward and become more sustainable. A business will need to provide 20% of their own match funding. The application process is open to Sole Traders providing rural services, Businesses providing rural services, Town and Parish Councils; Local Community led organisations operating on a not-for-profit basis and are legally constituted. The fund which is part of the wider £6m Somerset Recovery Fund will close at 5pm on 10 September 2021. Initial applications will be treated on a first come, first served basis but we will need time to check eligibility and respond. Details and application form can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/business-and-economy/somerset-recovery-fund

Afghan refugees: Somerset County Council is committed to help a scheme to house Afghans who supported British military and to resettle interpreters and translators. People across Somerset have been stepping forward to help support Afghan refugees as the crisis being played out in the international spotlight deepens. The Council anticipates the Government will fund a number of

places for refugees with strict rules on the types and locations of suitable accommodation. Anyone who would like to help in anyway should contact resettlement@somerset.gov.uk

Carbon Reduction: Over half of street lighting in Somerset is now eco-friendly and playing an important role helping the county work towards its 2030 carbon neutral target. Somerset County Council's Highway Lighting Team has started to reduce its carbon footprint in the past five years thanks to the installation of LED lanterns in 56 per cent of street lighting stock. The LED replacements have seen a reduction in the carbon produced per year, down from 9,522 tonnes in 2015/16 to 3,278 tonnes in 2020/21: a reduction of 6,244 tonnes of Co2 and resulting in a 31.75% energy saving equal to £950,00 per year.

Care leavers guaranteed interview scheme: As part of Somerset County Council's commitment to support care leavers, the council has agreed to extend its Care Leaver Guaranteed Interview Scheme to anybody who was in care as a child, wherever that was, and whatever their age now. This means people who have been in the care of a Local Authority for a significant period before the age of 16 and apply for a job with Somerset County Council will be guaranteed a job interview – provided they meet the essential job criteria.

District Council Report

UNITARY - The next step is for the County to put forward to Central Government proposals for the numbers of new councillors. MHCLG are looking for well below 100, though it is argued that this would give a democratic deficit. The simple solution is to go for 110, ie putting 2 unitary councillors in each existing County ward. Proposals have to be submitted by mid-September.