

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
Miss V Watts, Clerk to the Council
Tel: 07971 516916 / 01749 880428
Email: clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com

In line with government guidance and recommended social distancing and self-isolation rules for those who are vulnerable, it was agreed that this meeting would be conducted as a virtual meeting using Zoom video technology.

Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 11th November 2020

Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Allen (Part), Banks, Barrett, Conn, Drescher, Evans, Hanney (Part), Pearce, Townsend and Turner (Part).

There were 4 members of the public

1. Public Forum

Cllr Ham asked for a minutes silence to remember those who sadly lost their life in all wars.

There were 4 members of the public present all interested to hear how the Parish Council intended to respond to the latest Gladman application. The Chairman therefore agreed for a summary to be given by Cllr Townsend as part of the public forum as follows:

Cllr Townsend reported that as a Ward Councillor he had been notified that Gladmans had submitted a revised application. It is difficult to see that there are any changes, as it looks the same as the original application. Cllr Townsend said that he had asked if they are legally able to resubmit the same application and apparently they can. It seems questionable how the planning officer can approve the resubmission after the original application was refused by the planning board.

Cllr Allen joined the meeting at 19.11hrs

The Clerk is yet to receive notification having recently established that the planning department has been using an incorrect email address. The properties which adjoin the site have been included within the consultation.

Cllr Turner joined the meeting at 19.14hrs

Cllr Townsend said that if the Parish Council was to confirm its previous resolution to object, then the Council should decide whether to employ the same planning consultant. He has confirmed his availability, and the Parish Council still has £2930 allocated for this purpose in the Budget.

Cllr Hanney joined the meeting at 19.16hrs

As meeting in public are not possible Cllr Townsend suggested that 2 Councillors should liaise and co-ordinate with the Action Group.

There are questions about transparency. Cllr Townsend suggested that the Parish Council requests access to Mendip District Councils files to see what exchanges have taken place with Gladman in addition to what we see on the public file. It was agreed that Cllr Ham and Townsend would liaise with the Planning Officer to request sight of these documents.

Action: Cllrs Ham & Townsend to liaise with planning officer

It was noted that the address is still incorrectly listed as, Land south of Suncroft, Lipyeate Cross to Luckington Cross - this has been pointed out before.

Cllr Townsend suggested that the Parish Council should write to MP David Warburton to make representations about the current planning situation.

Action: Cllrs Townsend to draft the letter

Cllr Townsend said that with the original application there had been no support from Mendip District Council or Somerset County Council regarding our concerns over highways. This will be discussed with the Planning Consultant.

Action: Cllrs Townsend to action

As a consultee, Wessex Water did not respond to the original application. This will be discussed with the Planning Consultant.

Action: Cllrs Townsend to action

Cllr Townsend suggested that the Mendip Times and other local newspapers could be used for publicity along with the local Facebook pages and the use of signage around the locality.

Action: Cllrs Townsend to delegate task

Cllr Townsend suggested completing a survey of residents in the locality to establish how members travel for work or study, which could highlight how many residents are currently using the bus or cycling as transport.

Action: Cllrs Townsend to delegate task

Cllr Ham said that the Inspectors additional hearings for the Local Plan Part II will commence on Tuesday 24th November and are scheduled to end on Friday 4th December 2020, which may impact on the application. He also said that the applicant may still appeal the decision of the planning board.

Cllr Conn said that he would be happy to assist Cllr Townsend and the Action Group. He had been told that Rode, Beckington and Norton St Philip Parish Councils are also facing pressure for housing development. The lawyer who they have employed has apparently written to Mendip stating that their major planning applications for housing should not be determined whilst the local plan is being decided. It would be worth referring to this in our objections and demanding that all the major planning applications for housing in the northern villages, including Coleford, should be dealt with together. .

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

There were none.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

Cllrs Ham, Banks, Barrett and Townsend all declared interests in agenda item 10d Small Grant Awards. There were no dispensations granted.

4. Approve Minutes of last Parish Council meetings held on the 14th and 28th October 2020

The above mentioned minutes were circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting. It was agreed that both sets accurately reflected the meetings and were therefore to be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to ensure the Chair signs both sets of minutes and uploads them to the website

5. Matters arising

From the meeting held on the 14th October:

- Clerk to send the Asset list to Cllr Evans to complete the audit of street furniture.
- Clerk to follow up the enquiry with the land registry to establish land owners at Beacon View
- Clerk confirmed that Time is Precious would be delighted to accept the Parish Councils offer of financial support for their Christmas Lights fundraiser.

From the meeting held on the 14th October:

- Cllr Ham and the Clerk to complete the application form for the Loss of Income fund before the planning meeting

Action: Clerk to ensure the matters arising are completed.

6. Reports

1. PCSO

The report had been circulated to all Councillors. The figures stated are for the whole of the Rural Beat North which makes it difficult to relate to Coleford.

2. Somerset County Council

County Cllr Philip Ham reported that

Corona Virus Update: Somerset is now in a period of enhanced lockdown measures aimed at stopping the spread of the Corona virus. The measures will be reviewed on or before the 2nd December. Whilst numbers in the County remain relatively low there has been a marked increase in the number of positive tests. As at 1st November, the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 2,738 and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 208. The rate per 100,000 currently stands at 65.5 for Somerset with Sedgemoor at 94.8 and SW&T at 70.6. The current number of total deaths across the County is currently 17% below the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 1.3 and 1.6. It is vitally important to remember at all times the Hands-Face-Space message.

2021 Primary School Places: Applications for Primary School places in 2021 need to be made through Somerset County Council's website: www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions. The deadline for submissions is Friday, 15 January 2021.

Winter Gritting: Somerset County Council's fleet of 23 Gritters will be maintaining the extended gritting service of last year, with approximately 900 miles of road up for treatment in 2020/21. Somerset County Council treat over a fifth of Somerset's roads and the main priority is to keep the busiest routes clear whenever ice or snow is expected. For more information about Somerset County Council's winter service programme, including a searchable map showing all the roads treated, please visit www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting and follow @TravelSomerset on Twitter.

Climate Emergency Strategy: The Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy which identifies key priorities to reduce the carbon footprint across the County and achieve Carbon neutrality by 2030 has been written with the assistance of over 5,000 residents who took part in the survey and drop in events. The strategy will now be presented to the Somerset County Council Full Council meeting on 18th November for endorsement.

One Somerset: The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick, has written to all council leaders in Somerset inviting them to submit their business cases for Local Government Reform by 9 November 2020 with final supporting submissions to MHCLG by 9th December. It is then expected that the Secretary of State will make a decision in early summer 2021.

Somerset Youth Parliament: Somerset Youth Parliament and Somerset County Council are encouraging schools, colleges and youth projects across the county to have their say, make a difference and ensure young people's voices are heard on key issues. The online British Youth Council survey encourages all young people aged 11 to 18 years to vote on issues which are most important to them. These top issues will then be debated and voted on by elected Members of Youth Parliament, helping create the next UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) manifesto. Individuals, schools, clubs and youth projects are able to register and find out more online at www.byc.org.uk

Family Safeguarding: A new way to support children and families in Somerset has been launched with the aim of strengthening families to overcome their issues and thereby reducing the number of children needing to come into care. Somerset County Council, in partnership with The YOU Trust and the Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service (SDAS), has created the ‘Family Safeguarding Team’ – a new way of working that will transform how support is given to children and families in the county. A really helpful YouTube video has been created to explain the approach, which can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/u2WMICx8KTY>

Stepping Stone Placements: More homes are urgently needed in Somerset to provide vital support to young people as they move from care into adulthood. With more than 300 young care leavers in Somerset currently the demand for placements far outweighs availability. ‘Stepping Stones’ providers receive a weekly fee, starting at £185 per week, plus a little extra for food and utilities (up to £27.50) paid weekly by the young person from their allowance. Providers are also eligible for the same tax exemptions and relief as foster carers, but have much more flexibility to work full or part-time alongside their care role. If you have a spare room and would like to help, please visit www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk or call 0800 5879900

3. District Council

District Cllr Townsend and Ham circulated the following joint report:

Climate and ecological emergency – An Extraordinary meeting of Scrutiny was held on 19th October to review the County-wide Climate Emergency Policy. The Climate Emergency was declared by the previous Council in February 2019 and a great deal of work has gone into preparing a strategy but Members were unanimous in that it was long on hot air but short of action. Parish involvement will be encouraged. The Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet on 2nd November and approved by an Extraordinary meeting of Full Council on 9th November. The main criticism was repeated that it lacked clarity and urgency.

Planning - Natural England have advised that the level of phosphates in the protected parts of the Levels exceed the internationally agreed (Ramsar) levels. As a result all new planning applications for dwellings or expanded livestock provision are on hold if they would drain into the Levels.

Cllr Townsends examination of planning delays continues.

Cabinet 2nd November

A plan for Mendip District Council to provide 160 affordable houses with a target of 60 for social rent was presented. These would be on Mendip District Council owned sites. Mendip District Council’s partner in the enterprise is Aster. The Easthill site in Frome opposite ASDA aroused considerable controversy because it is a greenfield site. Also there was concern that the choice of Aster did not necessarily represent best value for money so the decision has been Called In for review by the Scrutiny Board.

A fuel poverty and carbon emissions paper was presented. It was agreed that resource will be made available for a promotional campaign with targeted interventions aimed at residents on lower incomes and those at risk of fuel poverty living in poor housing.

7. **Planning Applications**

There were none.

8. **Planning updates**

The Clerk confirmed that an extension in time had been given to allow planning application 2020/2183/OTA, the erection of an Eco Barn Dwelling at Pippit Barn, Lipyeate Cross To Luckington Cross, Coleford, BA3 5EL to be considered at the planning meeting on the 25th November.

2020/1033/FUL - It was reported that after the Parish Council request in July for access to the accounts to support the Springwater Farm application, they have still not been submitted. These were required to validate the viability of the business. Mendip District Council are checking the legal aspects of a failure to supply the information.

2020/1377/VRC – The proposed Co-op store. In response to a Parish Council objection to the latest revised plans showing a flat roof on the store, the Planning Officer had emailed to say that following additional review the LPA determined that the revised plans were detrimental to the existing street scene, considering the removal of the pitched roof. The applicant and agent have now agreed to revert back to the original plans, which had previously been

approved by the Parish Council. Therefore the application will be determined under delegated powers and this will be explained within the officer report.

9. Update on Highways and Footpaths

Cllr Townsend reported that the two small edge erosion potholes on Charmborough Lane have been filled in as they are at a pinch point. There were reports of an incident last Thursday with the road blocked and vehicles turning to go back towards the village – any further details should be sent to Cllr Townsend.

Cllr Townsend has reported the issues with HGV restriction and horse warning signage at Dark Lane etc, also the HGV incident on Church St and the continuing issues opposite the Co-op to Sara Davis of Somerset Highways and asked for an urgent site visit. No doubt the lockdown will affect this but this will be chased up.

Brewery Lane – This will be closed for 7 days from 18th November. Further complaints have been received about HGV use on Whitehole Lane. Cllr Townsend will try to get Sara Davis to view the issues on her visit to Coleford. Also we will try to get further information on the reasons for the increased usage. The alternative routes were not well received when we raised this last year.

There were no new issues highlighted.

Footpaths – The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Barret had reviewed the latest Footpath reports and had updated a list of repairs. This has now sent to Somerset Rights of Way and the Ramblers and it is hoped that after the Covid restrictions are eased some of these will be actioned.

10. Finance

10.1 – 2nd Quarter Budget Review

The budget review had been considered by the Finance working party and circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. There were no concerns or questions raised and it was therefore agreed that they should be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

10.2 – Conclusion of Audit 2019-20

The Clerk reported that the external auditor report had been received. It stated that:

- Information received from Coleford PC indicated that £19,895 of VAT refunds received in error had been included as income in Section 2, Box 3 and as expenditure in Section 2, Box 6 after the amount was repaid to HMRC. On repayment, this amount should have been netted off from Box 3 rather than being shown as both a receipt and a payment. Therefore, Boxes 3 and 6 for the current year should read £6,160 and £44,311, respectively.
- Section 2 was signed by the Responsible Finance Officer before 31 March 2020.

The Clerk confirmed that the notice of conclusion of audit had been displayed on the parish notice boards and website as required.

10.3 – Consider payment for the Youth Club

Cllr Ham said that the Youth club costs £11500 to deliver the service, which includes a percentage of the costs of YMCA overheads, training, insurance, safeguarding, 2 x staff minimum etc. The cost is then reduced by lottery funding obtained by the YMCA leaving a balance of £8000 per year. Until now further grants from Somerset County Council have been received but that funding has now been withdrawn.

Cllr Ham said that in 2019/20 the Parish Council paid £6000 so £2000 still due but this has been challenged as several weeks were missed and then closed due to the Coronavirus in March 2020. The invoice for 2020/21 has been received for £8000 but Cllr Ham has questioned whether during Covid we have been getting value for money. A detailed report from the YMCA has been received which highlights that we are, with the team supporting the young people during lockdown. However, it's difficult to validate and we often question this with regards to Youth provisions

Cllr Ham reported that the Council knows that we attract those that need help in our youth community and in past interventions through the youth club has proved to be very valuable. Mental health in young people is probably at its lowest for many years.

Cllr Ham confirmed that the Parish Council has earmarked £6000 in its budget for the Youth club and recommended that the Council pays £6000 and monitor progress over the coming months.

Cllr Conn said that having read the report he was impressed with the way that the Youth workers were interacting using modern technology in a positive way. The mental health of the young people is a big issue in these difficult times. Cllr Turner proposed that the Parish Council should pay the £6000, which was seconded by Cllr Conn.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to ensure that cheque is sent to the YMCA

10.4 – Consider and approve applications for the Small Grants awards

The working party made up of Cllr Conn, Evans and Pearce met on Wednesday 4th November 2020 using Zoom to consider the applications which had been received. They recommended that no grant be offered to Bishop Henderson School for the Reflection garden and Early year's quiet area for a number of reasons:

- (1) the scale of the project is much larger than the size of the small grants budget
- (2) offering a useful amount would prevent grant offers to other very worthwhile village activities
- (3) a Parish Council special grant offer of £500 towards a bike shed was made a year or two ago which has not been taken up
- (4) Councillors had doubts about the benefit of some aspects of the scheme
- (5) grant offers could lock up PC funds for some time whilst the project is funded and completed.

On balance, the Working Party thought that there were more appropriate funding sources elsewhere.

Recommendations were

Coleford Foodbank - Food for those in need	£250.00	<i>Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions</i>
@ The Hub - Microwave oven/grill	£300.00	<i>Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 3 Abstentions</i>
@ The Hub – Dishwasher	£300.00	<i>Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 3 Abstentions</i>
Hucky Duck Carnival Club - Ceiling lights	£200.00	<i>Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions</i>
Coleford Circuits - Gym equipment	£100.00	<i>Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions</i>
Tuesday Afternoon Club – Catering	£250.00	<i>Vote: 11 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions</i>
Coleford Revival Group - Christmas Hampers	£700.00	<i>Vote: 10 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions</i>
Coleford Theatre Group – Lighting	£250.00	<i>Vote: 10 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions</i>

It was recommended that the unallocated budget of £150 be retained for emergencies and, if unspent, rolled over into 2021-22 funding, due to the many uncertainties prevailing.

Action: Clerk to notify all applicants of the decisions and write to the School to establish the status of the bike shelter project.

10.5 - Accounts approved for payments

The following payments were presented for payment:

Watts - Clerk expenses	£77.99	
Back pay (Apr to Oct)	£360.16	
Back pay (Nov)	£51.00	Total £489.15
HMRC – National Insurance	- £32.66	
Somerset County Council Pension Fund: Back dating to April 20	- £79.80	
PKF Littlejohn LLP: Audit fee	- £360.00	
Cam Valley Wildlife Group: Annual membership	£5.00	
Switchsafe: Showerhead Plus	- £69.00	
YMCA: Coleford Youth Club	- £6,000.00	
SALC training: Creating accessible documents	- £30.00	
Coleford Foodbank: Food for those in need	- £250.00	
@ The Hub: Microwave oven/grill	- £300.00	
@ The Hub: Dishwasher	- £300.00	
Hucky Duck Carnival Club: Ceiling lights	- £200.00	
Coleford Circuits: Gym equipment	- £100.00	
Tuesday Afternoon Club: Catering	- £250.00	
Coleford Revival Group: Christmas Hampers	- £700.00	

It was proposed by Cllr Townsend and seconded by Cllr Banks that the payments should be made.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

11. Environment committee

Update on the condition of grit bins, litter bins, street furniture

It was agreed that the clerk would send the list of street furniture for Cllr Evans to review.

**Action: Clerk to provide asset register. Environment committee to complete the review.
Agenda item for the December meeting**

12. Review quote for renovation of finger posts

The contractor Chris Ingrem has quoted as follows:

Lipyeate Cross £310
Newbury Lane £130
Charnborough Lane £130

Cllr Townsend agreed to speak with the homeowner at Lipyeate Cross as their hedge needs to be cut back ahead of the work and the contractor is likely to need access to their land.

Cllr Ham said that Kilmersdon Parish Council will be considering the request to renovate the Charnborough Lane post at this week's meeting.

It was agreed that the quote should be accepted for Lipyeate Cross and Newbury Lane.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

**Action: Clerk to notify Chris Ingrem that we want to pursue with 2 posts
Cllr Townsend to speak with the landowner at Lipyeate Cross**

13. Consider quote for painting the youth shelter

Cllr Ham said that a contractor had quoted £200 to complete the paint work on the youth shelter. It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the quote be accepted.

Vote: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cllr Ham to notify the contractor

14. Consider Coleford Parish Council bid for Somerset County Council £1m Climate Emergency Community Fund

Cllr Conn had circulated a detailed report with the following proposals:

Adult Fitness Track at Highbury PF

Grassland alongside the hard surfaced path to the play area could accommodate 5 pieces of fitness equipment. This would broaden the local opportunities for exercise and fitness. Access to equipment by people with disabilities should be a key consideration

Enhance Area around the Pump Track for Older Children and Teenagers

This age group is thought to be particularly affected by limited opportunities in the village and limited public transport. The current virus problem will also have a negative effect on their lives. The pump track provides a focus for some of this age group, but not for those who don't wish to ride. Re-location of the teenage shelter, which is currently undergoing renovation by the Parish Council and installation of a large group basket swing would increase the area's attraction for this age group.

Community Orchards, including grassland management for wildflowers at Highbury and Coleford PFs

Half standard trees would be planted by volunteers. Spacing would be about 10 metres (instead of an orchard spacing of 3.5 metres) to allow the surrounding grassland to grow. Some areas would be kept free of trees to focus on wild flowers. Grass around the trees and the more open areas would be mown like a hay meadow by the Parish Council's contractor (Spring and Autumn only), with removal of cut grass to reduce fertility and encourage wildflowers to grow. The exception would be designated paths and around benches, which would be mown as part of the normal grass-cutting contract regime. Subject to soil sampling, further work may be needed to encourage more wild flowers. This could be done at limited cost by volunteers working with the Parish Council and Somerset Wildlife Trust, to strip turf and re-seed.

The orchards would provide local opportunities to gather fruit for home cooking and cider making, plus provide more interesting paths for walking, support biodiversity, achieve carbon capture and help mitigation.

New allotments, Permaculture / Forest garden plot and Community Composting

(Site at Highbury PF, subject to outcome of current PC search for sites)

A plot area of 45 by 35 metres could be used to support access paths, a hard area of c175 square metres for allotment and community composting, 10 new allotments each 90 sq metres approx. (believed to be similar in size to some of the Goodeaves plots), a further area of about 160 sq metres to be let as a permaculture allotment, with an emphasis on growing perennial food crops, fruit and nuts, including fruit trees. The latter could be used to explore and demonstrate less intensive food production. A water supply to a push operated tap from the nearby main in Highbury St or Newbury Lane would be an added attraction.

This project would meet the increased demand locally for allotments and support local sustainable living, achieve some carbon capture, through the permaculture, hedging and composting elements, support local waste reduction and, in particular community composting.

Main Implications for the Parish Council

At this stage, we need to be aware of:

- Work needed to finalise the bid, including consultation to establish the community response, plus checking legal issues and completing the bid costings and other supporting documents.
- If successful, the work needed to implement the proposals, including organising volunteer work, appointing / supervising contractors, responding to public comments, cost control, monitoring and keeping evidence, and reporting back to Somerset County Council.
- Changes to the next grounds maintenance and grass cutting contract – to include more selective grass cutting in the orchard / wildflower areas and possibly hedge cutting
- Letting new allotments and supervision, including the composting area and hedge maintenance
- Our dependence upon finding enthusiastic volunteers (orchard planting and maintenance) and allotment holders.

Cllr Hanney left the meeting at 20.75hrs

Recommendation

That the Parish Council decides:

- whether the PC has the human resources to support the bid and who is willing to contribute time to a working party, bearing in mind other commitments
- whether the PC has the human resources to implement the projects and who is willing to contribute to a project team, should a bid be successful.
- what the bid should include – not all ideas may be acceptable
- whether the Parish Council wishes to proceed with a bid
- membership of working party for the bid.

Councillors voted on each recommendation individually, each time with the following results:

Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cllr Drescher and the Clerk to seek quotes for the gym equipment

Cllr Conn to draft a document to consult the parishioners and seek volunteers via notice boards, website, On the Map and Facebook

Coleford bid to be included on the next agenda.

15. Review quotes for re fencing the Hard Courts

The Clerk confirmed that she had received 2 quotes, with other companies promising to respond but yet received. Concern was expressed as to whether replacing the wire alone was the right way forward for the space. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Allen would seek quotes for in the installation of astro turf surfacing and new fencing. Once received consultation with parishioners will be undertaken.

Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Both Cllr Allen and the Clerk to get quotes for fencing and surfacing

Agenda item for the December meeting.

16. Review opening of the Changing rooms

Although due to lockdown the changing rooms remain closed, the Clerk asked if talks could begin with the Football club to start preparing the risk assessment, signage etc to ensure that everything is in place ready for the day when the changing rooms can re-open. It was proposed by Cllr Ham and seconded by Cllr Turner that the Clerk should speak with the football club to start the process of preparing for reopening when the Parish Council considers it safe to do so. The risk assessment will be submitted to the Parish Council for review.

Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to speak with the football club

Agenda item for the next meeting.

17. Discuss Orchard Close allotment tenancy agreements

Cllr Ham had established that the allotments could not be sold unless there are options for other allotments. This is being considered as part of the Parish Councils bid from the Somerset Climate Emergency fund

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting.

18. Discuss quotes for rain water harvesting at Goodeaves allotments

The Clerk said that she had researched systems that could be used to harvest rainfall at the allotments but was concerned that there was not sufficient area to capture enough to make it worthwhile and suggested completing an audit of how allotment holders are currently coping without a mains water supply. Cllr Conn questioned whether it might be possible to utilize the roof area from the neighbouring bungalows to capture water and store on the allotment site. Cllr Ham said that he would visit the site to assess what options there are for harvesting.

Action: Cllr Ham to visit the allotments to survey if rain water harvesting options are feasible

Agenda item for the December meeting.

19. Discuss requirements for new Allotments

The Clerk confirmed that posters seeking land for allotment has been publicized on Facebook and on the village notice boards but there have been no response as yet. Cllr Ham has also provided the Clerk with a list of local landowners who might be able to rent or sell land for the purpose of new allotments. The Clerk will make this a priority over the next few days for review at the December meeting.

Action: Clerk to write to landowners to establish if anyone has land that could be used as allotments

Agenda item for December meeting

20. Discuss plans for the BT Kiosk

The Clerk said that she had consulted parishioners on how the BT kiosk could be utilized and whether it should be relocated. Those responding to the Facebook post were in favour of the kiosk remaining at Careys Mead. Various suggestions had been made with the most popular being for it to be used for a mini library, plant/seed exchange or to house a defibrillator. It was noted that the location was not ideal for a third defibrillator in light of it being so close to the unit sited outside of the Co-op.

Cllr Banks said that if the land at Careys Mead was to be acquired and used to improve the parking in the area as previously discussed, then the kiosk may well need to be relocated. Cllr Ham said that the discussion over acquiring

the land was ongoing but suggested that the kiosk should be utilized in the existing location for the time being. It is understood that the door handle needs repair.

Action: Clerk to seek volunteer or contractor to repair the door handle. Establish if the electricity supply can be utilized.

21. Consider SALC training opportunities

The Clerk had circulated the latest training events and Councillors were encouraged to notify the Clerk if they wished to attend.

22. Review future in person Council meetings

It was agreed that in light of the recent announcements from Central government that meetings would continue via Zoom and be reviewed at each meeting.

23. Correspondence

SAVE Climate request – No action required

War Memorials Newsletter – No action required

Mendip Community Transport update on activities – No action required

24. Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion

Cllr Townsend proposed that the Parish Council should reinstate the planning consultant Mark Reynolds of Context Planning to assist with the resubmitted Gladman’s application which was seconded by Cllr Pearce. It was noted that there was £2930 still available in the budget for professional fees.

Vote: 10 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

25. Date of Next Meetings:

Wed 25th November 2020 Planning Meeting

Wed 9th December 2020 Parish Council

Councillor Andy Conn's Report

Somerset CC Climate Change Fund – First Step towards a Bid by Coleford PC

Introduction

1. Parish councils can bid for the recently announced Climate Emergency Fund. It is possible for the PC to prepare and submit a credible bid before the second (and final) tranche deadline of 12th January 2021. This report outlines some ideas for a bid.

Timeline

2. To meet the required deadline and allow for the fact that the last scheduled PC meeting before that date is 9th December, the following key stages to submission of a bid are suggested:

Process	Date to be achieved
decision on broad content of bid, human resources (working party) and timetable	11 th November (tonight)
Work up bid details and carry out public consultation (Coleford Echo and Notice Boards)	12 th November to 4 th December (consultation 16 th Nov to 4 th Dec)
PC main decision on bid and empower working party to make final decision on details	9 th December
Work up supporting documents and submit	12 th January 2021

Outline of Climate Emergency Fund Objectives

3. These are :-
 - i. Reduce carbon emissions
 - ii. reduce consumption
 - iii. raise awareness of climate change issues
 - iv. increase resilience to the impacts of climate change

Key Features of the Fund and bids

4. Bids must be between £5000 and £75000. (The PC has already used £2273 of its allowance for the countywide funding bid by Somerset Wildlife Trust and parishes, leaving £72,727 max.)
5. Bids can be for capital and revenue elements, feasibility work and implementation.
6. Successful bids must include a timetable for works to be completed.
7. Bids have to include assessments of value for money, SMART¹ assessments, evidence of competent management, evidence of innovation, willingness to share experience and consider equality and diversity – in other words, a lot of work and paper
8. Grants can be added to from other sources (eg other bids and PC funds)
9. Bids can (amongst other objectives) (SCC numbering)
 - (g) improve biodiversity and ecological adaptation and resilience
 - (h) achieve carbon capture and storage e.g. by tree planting
 - (j) encourage more sustainable living by the local community
 - (k) help the environment to mitigate the effect of climate change
 - (l) support waste reduction and (n) encourage community composting.

¹ SMART Objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-based

10. Bids also need to reflect the One Planet principles. There are 10 of these, including principles relating to health and happiness, culture and community, land and nature, local and sustainable food, and zero waste.
11. It is suggested that a bid by Coleford PC could pursue these particular objectives and principles. Other objectives, such as community energy schemes and sustainable transport, are beyond our reach.

Key Considerations / Opportunities

12. There appear to be spaces at both Highbury and Coleford Playing Fields that could be used more. However, consultation will be needed to assess whether the community would support their use.
13. Recently, members of the community have shown interest in community orchards and (less recently) an adult fitness track.
14. Tree planting is not always the best approach to grassland, because it may already be locking up carbon and may be suitable for wildflower meadow management, which also locks up carbon and is a relatively rare habitat now, due to changes in farming.
15. There is a waiting list for allotments. Current users think that the lack of a water supply at Goodeaves is a disadvantage.
16. The need for planning permission (eg for hard surface pathways and spoil bund) and Charity Commission consent (Highbury PF) needs to be checked.

Outline of Proposals (See also attached plans and draft spreadsheet)

Adult Fitness Track at Highbury PF

17. Grassland alongside the hard surfaced path to the play area could accommodate 5 pieces of fitness equipment. This would broaden the local opportunities for exercise and fitness (objective j). Access to equipment by people with disabilities should be a key consideration

Enhance Area around the Pump Track for Older Children and Teenagers

18. This age group is thought to be particularly affected by limited opportunities in the village and limited public transport. The current virus problem will also have a negative effect on their lives. The pump track provides a focus for some of this age group, but not for those who don't wish to ride. Re-location of the teenage shelter (currently undergoing renovation by the PC) and installation of a large group basket swing would increase the area's attraction for this age group.

Community Orchards, including grassland management for wildflowers at Coleford Playing Field (Appendix 1) and Highbury (Appendix 2)

19. Half standard trees would be planted by volunteers. Spacing would be about 10 metres (instead of an orchard spacing of 3.5 metres) to allow the surrounding grassland to grow. Some areas would be kept free of trees to focus on wild flowers. Grass around the trees and the more open areas would be mown like a hay meadow by the PC's contractor (Spring and Autumn only), with removal of cut grass to reduce fertility and encourage wildflowers to grow. The exception would be designated paths and around benches, which would be mown as part of the normal grass-cutting contract regime. Subject to soil sampling, further work may be needed to encourage more wild flowers. This could be done at limited cost by volunteers working with the PC and Somerset Wildlife Trust, to strip turf and re-seed.
20. The orchards would provide local opportunities to gather fruit for home cooking and cider making, plus provide more interesting paths for walking (objective j), support biodiversity (objective g), achieve carbon capture (objective h) and help mitigation (objective k).

New allotments, Permaculture / Forest garden plot and Community Composting (Appendix 3) (Site at Highbury PF, subject to outcome of current PC search for sites)

21. A plot area of 45 by 35 metres could be used to support access paths, a hard area of c175 square metres for allotment and community composting, 10 new allotments each 90 sq metres approx. (believed to be similar in size to some of the Goodeaves plots), a further area of about 160 sq metres to be let as a permaculture allotment, with an emphasis on growing perennial food crops, fruit and nuts, including fruit trees. The latter could be used to explore and demonstrate less intensive food production. A water supply to a push operated tap from the nearby main in Highbury St or Newbury Lane would be an added attraction.
22. This project would meet the increased demand locally for allotments and support local sustainable living (objective j), achieve some carbon capture, through the permaculture, hedging and composting elements (objective h), support local waste reduction and, in particular community composting (objectives l and n).

Main Implications for the Parish Council

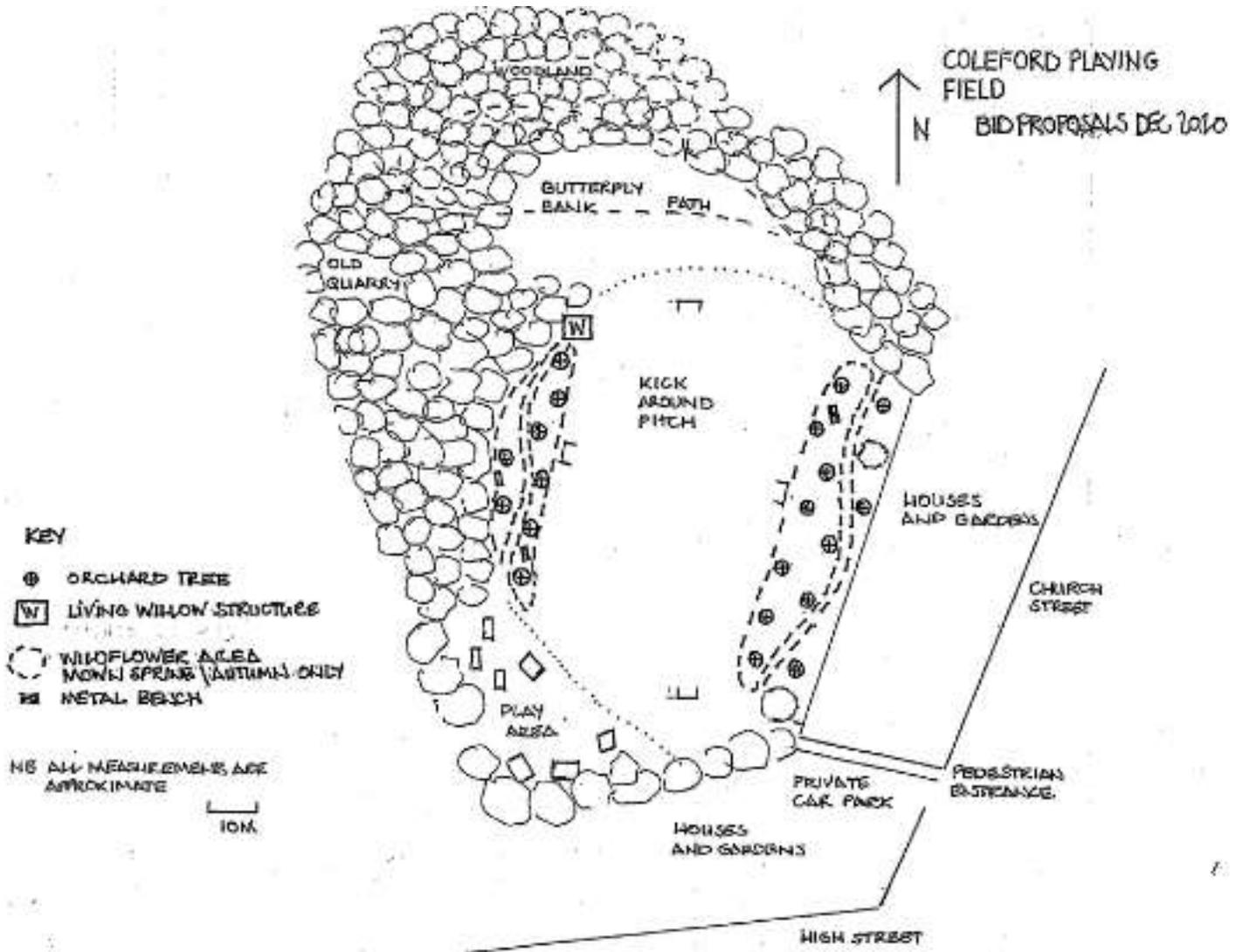
23. At this stage, we need to be aware of :
 - i. Work needed to finalise the bid, including consultation to establish the community response, plus checking legal issues and completing the bid costings and other supporting documents.
 - ii. If successful, the work needed to implement the proposals, including organising volunteer work, appointing / supervising contractors, responding to public comments, cost control, monitoring and keeping evidence, and reporting back to Somerset CC.
 - iii. Changes to the next grounds maintenance and grass cutting contract – to include more selective grass cutting in the orchard / wildflower areas and possibly hedge cutting
 - iv. letting new allotments and supervision, including the composting area and hedge maintenance
 - v. Our dependence upon finding enthusiastic volunteers (orchard planting and maintenance) and allotment holders.

Recommendation

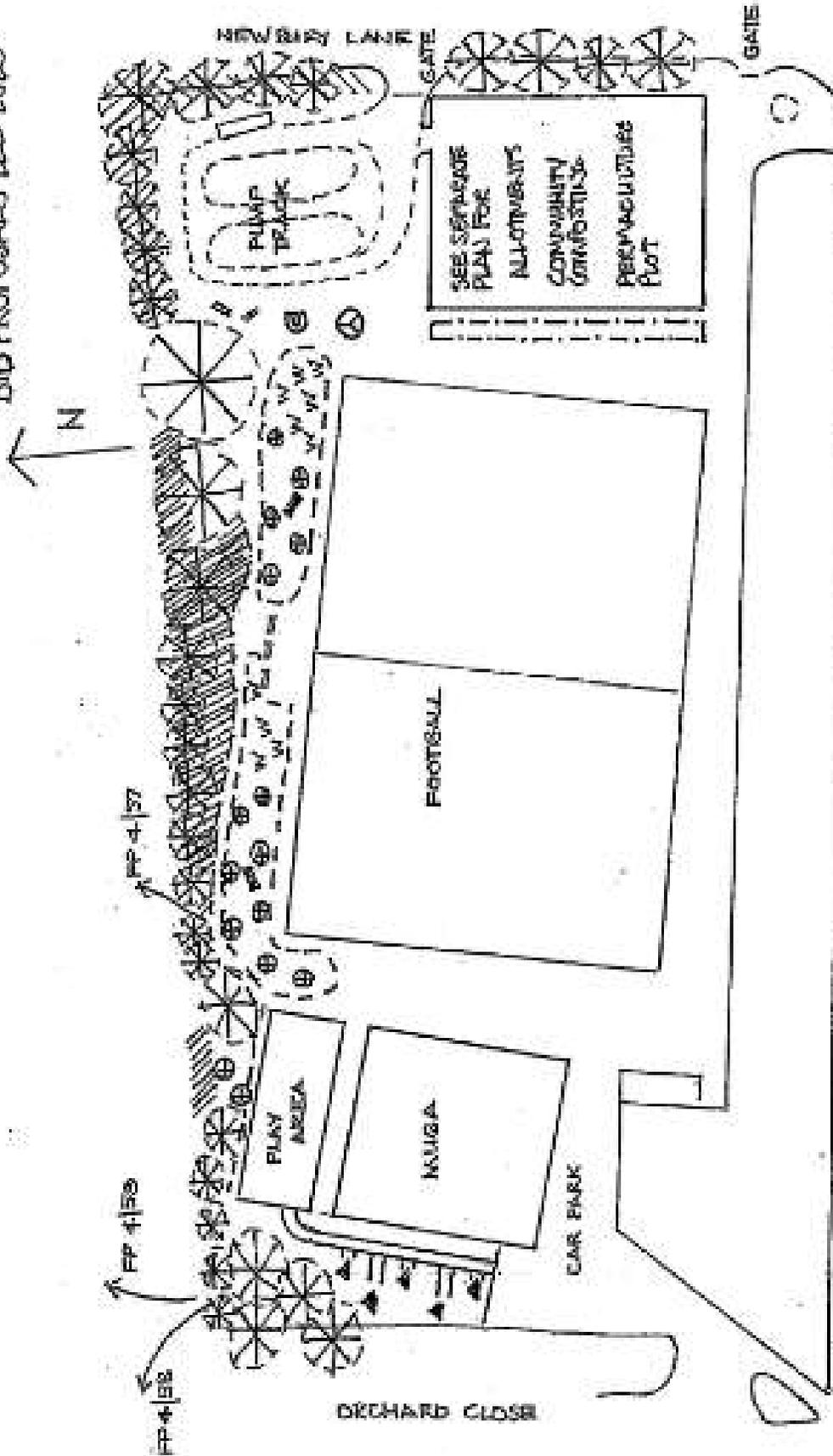
24. That the Parish Council decides
 - i. whether the PC has the human resources to support the bid and who is willing to contribute time to a working party, bearing in mind other commitments
 - ii. whether the PC has the human resources to implement the projects and who is willing to contribute to a project team, should a bid be successful.
 - iii. what the bid should include – not all ideas may be acceptable
 - iv. whether the Parish Council wishes to proceed with a bid
 - v. membership of working party for the bid.

AC 06/11/20

Appendix 1 - Community Orchards, including grassland management for wildflowers Coleford Playing Field



HIGHBURY PLAYING FIELD
 BID PROPOSALS DEC 2020



- KEY
- ⊕ ORCHARD TREE
 - ⊙ WILDFLOWER FLEXCITY (NO TREES)
 - ⊖ WILDFLOWER AREA - MOWN STRIPS / AUTUMNAL ONLY
 - ⊞ METAL BOLLICH
 - ⊕ ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT AND ACCESS PATH
 - ⊕ TENNIS SHED (AFTER FC RENOVATION)
 - ⊕ NEST SWING
 - ⊕ EXISTING TREES
 - ⊕ EXISTING HEDGES OR SCRUB
- HIGHBURY ST
- SEE SEPARATE PLAN FOR
 ALLOTMENTS
 COMMUNITY GARDENS
 PERMACULTURES Plot
- GATE
- NEW BABY LAKE
- PUMP TRACK
- FOOTBALL
- PLAY AREA
- MUGA
- CAR PARK
- ORCHARD CLOSE
- N
- 10M
- NB ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE

Appendix 3 - New allotments, Permaculture / Forest garden plot and Community Composting

ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY COMPOSTING +
PERMACULTURE PLOT
HIGHBURY PLAYING FIELD DEC 2020

