

Parish Council of Coleford

Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
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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 Parish Council Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday the 13th January 2021

Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Banks, Barrett, Conn, Evans, Hanney, Pearce, Townsend and Turner.
No members of the public attended.

1. Public Forum

Cllr Conn reported on behalf of Chris Osborne the following issues:

- i) The pavement located at the entrance to Springwater Farm, Anchor Road has yet again deteriorated to the point of it being a trip hazard.

Action: Clerk to report to Somerset Highways highlighting that the pavement needs urgent action stating that the landowners should pay the cost of the repair. Also to request that a hazard warning notice be placed on the pavement

- ii) There continues to be a stream of lorries delivering to Springwater Farm. It was understood that the work would have been completed by November.

Action: Cllr Townsend to ask Mendip Enforcement for an update.

- iii) It was asked when the new stretch of pavement on Anchor Road would be installed. Cllr Ham said that the work had been agreed by Somerset Highways but there had been delays created as a result of the pandemic.

James Hanney joined the meeting 19.11hrs

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

Cllrs Allen and Harding had both sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.
Cllrs Drescher and Talbot did not attend.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Approve Minutes of last Parish Council meetings held on the 8th December 2020

The minutes had been circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting. It was proposed that they were accurate and reflected the meeting and should therefore be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

5. Matters arising

All matter arising had been completed or would be discussed later in the meeting apart from:

- The Clerk confirmed that she had emailed the Land Registry to establish why no response had been received on the recent application to establish land ownership of the land at Beacon View despite the cheque for the application fee being cashed. As yet there had been no reply received.
- Clerk and Cllr Ham to complete the application for loss of income fund.

- Clerk to seek volunteer or contractor to repair the door handle on the phone box and establish if the electricity supply can be utilized.

Action Clerk to ensure that matters arising are completed

6. Reports

i) PCSO

A newsletter for the Frome Rural Beat North had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Poaching, speeding, theft / non dwelling burglary and fly tipping were noted as the current priorities.

The Beat Team contact details are as follows:

Beat manager – PC 2673 David Cohen, David.Cohen@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

PCSO 9011 Russell Ford, Mobile – 07547658018, Russell.ford@avonandsomerset.police.uk

PCSO 8118 Dan Beck, Daniel.Beck@avonandsomerset.police.uk

ii) County Councillor

Covid-19 Restrictions: Revised Government regulations mean that Somerset entered Tier 4 restrictions on from December 31st. The main requirements of this Tier are:

- No household mixing, aside from support bubbles and two people meeting in public outdoor spaces. Hospitality closed, except sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.
- Essential shops can open. Non-essential retail must close.
- Everyone must work from home unless they are unable to do so.
- Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open during term time. Registered childcare and childcare bubbles permitted.
- Indoor leisure, accommodation and personal care – closed.
- You must not stay overnight away from home.
- Indoor entertainment closed. Some outdoor attractions may remain open.
- Places of worship open for private prayer and communal worship.
- You must stay at home and only travel for work, education or other legally permitted reasons.
- You must not leave a Tier 4 area or stay overnight away from home. Coronavirus infection rates:

As at 31st December the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 9355 (up from 5,110 on 1st Dec) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 335 (228). The rate per 100,000 currently stands at 248.3 for Somerset with Mendip at 211.1, Sedgemoor at 332.9, South Somerset 193.1 and SW&T at 268.8. The current number of total deaths across the County is currently 3% above the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 1.0 and 1.2. It is vitally important to remember at all times the Hands-Face-Space message.

Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline: A single phone number is available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. 0300 790 6275, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm, offering a range of support – from help accessing food or medicines, to emotional and financial support, and employment, housing and business advice.

Vaccination programme roll-out: Somerset residents who have been identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunization (JCVI) as the highest priority are being invited for Covid-19 vaccinations first, including people aged over 80 and health and care staff. Residents should not contact their local NHS services for vaccination, they will be contacted when it's their turn and given the information that they need for their appointment. For more information visit: www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-duringcoronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset

Somerset County Council Support: More than 700 County Council staff are being redeployed to support the NHS challenge of rolling out the county's biggest ever vaccination programme. The first community GP-led sites have begun vaccinations and follows the launch of the programme in hospital hubs. Further plans are being drawn up to ensure vaccination in other locations across the county. Operating seven days a week which will require a considerable staffing resource and whilst every effort is being made to avoid disruption to Somerset County Council services some impact will undoubtedly be felt in areas outside of vulnerable people services.

High Speed Broadband: Three companies have been selected to roll-out the next phase of full fibre network on behalf of the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) programme, backed by Government funding. Airband, Truespeed and Wessex Internet will be installing full fibre broadband across Devon and Somerset to more than 56,000 rural homes and businesses over the next 4 years.

One Somerset Pledges: Somerset County Council has set out ten clear One Somerset pledges in the proposed move to a single Unitary authority:

1. No disruption to local services as we change, and a promise to keep you fully informed.
2. We will protect those front-line staff working with vulnerable people across the county.
3. Council tax will not increase because of moving to a single unitary council.
4. Physical, face-to-face council contact points across the county.
5. One telephone number and one website to access ALL council services.
6. Improved services for our vulnerable residents including housing, adults' & children's services. Improved services for our children and young people, including education, training, jobs and transport.
7. More local decision making by our town and parish councils and new local community networks.
8. Closer relationships with partners including the NHS, police, education, and the voluntary sector to deliver better services.
9. We will not split Somerset in half, divide communities, lose our proud identity, or weaken our standing on a local, regional and national level.

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

iii) **District Councillors**

Planning: Mendip still does not have a solution to the problem of excessive Phosphate levels on protected (Ramsar) sites on the Levels. At the moment applications for some 1500 houses remain on hold.

Local Plan Part 2 Examination – The Inspector is still expected to produce his report in January.

Consultations – There are concerns about the lack of publicity given by Mendip to the consultations on: Pre application and Planning Performance Agreement Service, Landscape and Character Assessment, and Statement of Community Involvement with respect to LPP1. It appears that none of the 5 Parish Councils which District Cllrs Ham and Townsend are involved with had any formal notification. This has been taken up with Mendip and a request made for an extension of time to respond.

Mendip Social Housing: After much heated debate Council finally agreed to pause the programme to allow proper consultation with the affected communities in Frome, Glastonbury and Street and examination of the whole process, including the selection of Aster. The hostility generated over the threat to the ecology of the site at Easthill, Frome must help with our defence of the environment against the Gladman application

Cabinet: The meeting on 11th January recorded that Mendip's priorities over the next few months are:

- Saving Lives, through supporting the extensive vaccine roll out and community testing
- Delivering Statutory Services, such as homelessness prevention, environmental health, licensing and planning
- Supporting the economy and our local people

We were reminded of the Somerset Covid Helpline **0300 790 6275** – this is open 8am to 6pm, 7 days a week.

A Somerset Recovery and Growth Plan was tabled with the objective of Building Back Better. This is a county-wide plan covering People, Business, Infrastructure and places and homes. The nearest item identified for us would appear to be the redevelopment of a railway station at Shepton Mallet. There is yet to be any specific reference to the Frome area. The Major areas identified appear to be Yeovil, Taunton, Bridgwater and the Gravity site on the old Royal Ordnance Factory at Puriton, with Glastonbury town centre also promoted. A bid is also being prepared for submission to Her Majesty's Government and United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority proposing Somerset as the centre for the Spherical Tokamat for Energy Production nuclear fusion project.

7. Planning Applications

- i) [2020/2308/HSE - 4 Anchor Close, Coleford, Radstock, BA3 5BZ](#)
[Retrospective garden shed/workshop replacement](#)

Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. Cllr Conn said that the garden shed had already been installed and was quite large but he could see no reason to object. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Conn and seconded by Cllr Pearce that the application be recommended for approval.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions (1 District Councillor)

- ii) [2020/2528/TPO](#) - The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Coleford, Radstock, BA3 5NG
G1 and T1 - Ash: Fell to ground level due to Ash Dieback. TPO M1075.

Councillors had considered the application prior to the meeting. Cllr Ham stated that if the trees had Ash die back then there really was little option other than to fell them to ground level. It was agreed that the application should be recommended for approval. Cllr Pearce suggested that a condition of the permission should be that replacement trees be planted.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstentions (1 District Councillor)

Action: Clerk to notify the Planning Office

8. Planning updates

1. [2020/2201/OTS - Gladman application, Anchor Road:](#)

Gladman have still not produced the additional Landscape appraisal that was promised with the application on 28th October. After our resolution at the last meeting The Clerk submitted our formal recommendation to refuse. At the same time she recorded our disappointment that the application was allowed to be registered with this key document missing and reserved the right for full consultation if and when it is finally received. Mendip's website recorded 270 objections on 12th January. Work continues to get County Highways to undertake a site visit to Charmborough Lane – this is not easy under current conditions. Prior warning has been given of another closure of Brewery Lane at the end of February. Yet again the diversion published by Highways is not via Charmborough Lane but all the way round to Kilmersdon, the Pipe works, Vobster and Coleford.

Appeal – Mendip have notified that Gladman have lodged an appeal with the Planning Inspectorate on 17th December against the refusal of planning permission in August for the original application ref 2019/2345. The Inspectorate are still validating the appeal, so we do not have a start date, a response date, the type of appeal or an Inspector's name.

2. [2020/2157/FUL – Erection of agricultural building for storage of hay, straw and machinery and part lambing shed. Meadow View Farm, Charlton Road, Holcombe](#)
Mendip District Council approved with conditions
3. [Request by Coleford Parish Council for Tree Preservation Order \(TPO\) on the Elm located in the boundary hedgerow along Anchor Road, Coleford.](#)

The Tree Officer, Bo Walsh has responded by saying that: 'The tree was not considered a suitable candidate for a TPO because of its location and conflict with the existing streetlight – i.e. it almost covers the lamp and would require regular pruning to keep it clear of the lamp; the tree is also very close to the highway itself and is not anywhere near maturity (not a major issue at this moment in time); and lastly although the species itself has importance nationally, which was a point also raised by the CPRE and local Councillors – regrettably, and as your letter observes Elm trees do not always survive due to their vulnerability / susceptibility to disease (i.e. Dutch Elm Disease) – and consequently there is no guarantee that any individual specimen Elm tree will not be affected by disease – therefore a TPO cannot safeguard any tree from environmental factors or pathological pest / disease.'

Councillors agreed that this refusal would be challenged.

Action: The Clerk to work with Cllr Townsend and Ham to draft a response.

9. Update on Highways

Cllr Townsend reported that:

Charmborough Lane – there is a duck invasion, please beware. Cllr Townsend has put up a warning sign.

Pedestrian crossing – Highways responded rapidly to Cllr Townsend’s request for a repair to the failed light by the Old Post Office.

Anchor Rd – the 30 mph sign has come loose again, Highways have been informed. The road surface is breaking up just beyond the sign. Also as reported earlier in the meeting, the pavement has become a safety hazard again at the entrance to Springwater Farm.

Action: Clerk to write to Somerset Highways Charlie Higgins to request that the landowner funds the pavement rather than the public. Enquire with Environmental Health whether the landowner has a license to be receiving waste.

a) Report of any new issues reported by Councillor

It was reported that the banks along Dark Lane are in a poor state. District Cllr Townsend said that he was pursuing a request for a weight restriction which would go some way to resolving this issue.

The road is flooding at the Fairy Cave lane junction at Stoke Bottom. Cllr Townsend to report.

The footpath next to the new yellow safety gate off Church St is flooding. Cllr Ham to investigate.

b) Discuss and agree new signage at Preachers Vale

Cllr Barret had spoken with Cllr Banks and Evans regarding improvements to the signage at Preachers Vale. It was agreed that the proposal would be circulated to all Councillors for comment prior to submitting to Niall Robertson of Mendip District Council for implementation.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to circulate proposed improvements to all Councillors

10. Finance

a) 3rd Quarter budget Review

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated the spreadsheet showing the financial position for the Parish Council as at the 31st December 2020. The forecast shows that the Council is predicted to end the year in line with the 2020/21 budget. All agreed that Cllr Ham should sign to approve the budget review.

Vote: 8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

(Cllr Hanney not visibly present at the time of voting)

b) Discuss and agree Budget for Precept 2021/22

The Clerk had circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting the proposed budget for the coming financial year 2021/22. After discussion it was agreed that in light of the current financial climate a 1% increase would be applied on last year making the Precept £44,541. This would equate to £1.12 per week for the Parish Council element of the Council tax for a resident living in a Band D property - A rise of 1p per week on last year.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to submit the Precept request to Mendip District Council

c) Consider request for financial support from Citizen Advice Mendip

A letter had been received from the Citizen Advice Mendip which listed the number of people from Coleford that had received advice during the last year. All agreed that the annual payment of £1000 made in previous years should be made again in April 2021.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to add payment to Citizen Advice Mendip to the April agenda

d) Accounts approved for payments

The following invoices were produced for payment:

Vickie Watts Clerk Expenses - £35.00

V Watts – Heartsafe Resus kit & QR labels - £33.85 (Paid by the Clerk)

HMRC National Insurance - £32.66

Wiltshire Publications Ltd – Grass cutting advertising Frome Times - £62.64

Tindal Newspapers West Country Ltd – Grass cutting advertising MSN Journal- £55.48

Riverside Cleaning contractors – Deep cleaning of changing room - £230.00

Cranmore PC – Covid signage x 10 for play areas - £85.00

Water 2 Business – Changing rooms June – Dec 2020 - £64.24

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

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to ensure cheques are signed and sent out

11. Consider quotes for Grass cutting

The Clerk said that she had received 2 sealed quotes but felt that more would be forthcoming and therefore the matter of deciding on a contractor should be postponed until the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for February

12. Update on the Somerset County Council Climate Emergency Fund bid

Cllr Conn confirmed that the bid had been submitted on the 9th January and acknowledgment had been received. The bid total amounted to £32,480 and included community orchards with benches, fitness area, a nest swing and allotments with community composting. A decision is expected by the 11th March as to whether we have been successful. Cllr Conn suggested an update on the application be posted on The Coleford Echo to inform residents. Should the application be successful, the next stages would be to:

- Make a decision on whether the allotment site is to be at Highbury playing field or an alternative site elsewhere in the village.
- Apply for planning permission for the hard standing at the allotment site (if required)
- Engage with parishioners for help with planting the orchard and wildflower areas

Cllr Ham thanked Cllr Conn for the work that he had done to complete the professional and thorough bid.

Cllr Conn thanked Cllrs. Ham, Drescher and the Clerk for their work on bid costings.

Action: Cllr Conn to draft a post for The Coleford Echo. Clerk to upload.

13. Update of Royal British Legion (Coleford) Asset of Community Value

Cllr Ham reported that a post was placed on The Coleford Echo seeking letters of support for the application to make the Royal British Legion building at Coleford an Asset of Community Value. To date, 19 letters had been received. The legal documents relating to the building are currently being copied ready for the application to be submitted before the January planning meeting.

Action: Cllr Ham to continue to progress

14. Review quotes for re fencing the Hard Courts and astro turf type surface

The Clerk said that Cllr Allen had confirmed that he was waiting for quotes on different options. It was therefore agreed that this would be an agenda item for the February meeting.

Action: Agenda item for February

15. Discuss Orchard Close allotment tenancy agreements

Cllr Ham confirmed that he had sought advice and it is understood that if we are creating new allotments then there should be no issue with disposing of these pieces of land. No further action until further notice.

16. Discuss quotes for rain water harvesting at Goodeaves allotments

Cllr Ham to provide costings to create rain harvesting and storage option at Goodeaves allotments.

Action: Cllr Ham to cost. Agenda item for February

17. Discuss requirements for new Allotments

It was agreed that this would be adjourned until the planning meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the January Planning meeting.

18. Consider whether a fence is required to protect pedestrians from the ditch at Beacon View

The Clerk said that an email had been received from a resident suggesting that the ditch be fenced to reduce the risk of any pedestrians slipping into the ditch. Cllr Conn had circulated photographs which show that at the top of the ditch where the pipe emerges, it would benefit from a fence of a few metres. Cllr Ham proposed that the ditch should not be fenced further down, where the land drop is limited. A design that would enable posts to be lifted for future maintenance of the ditch would be preferable. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek quotes.

Cllr Conn suggested that some ground cover planting along the edge of the ditch could be done in the future to improve the area visually. Future agenda item.

Action: Clerk to seek quotes for fencing. Ground cover planting to be an agenda item for February.

19. Correspondence

Clerks and Councils Direct – No action required

Training session to introduce the benefits of Scribe Accounting software – 21/01/21 @ 11.30. Emailed to all Clerks Regional Training Seminar 24/03/21 from 10 – 4pm. Clerk to attend

Stronger Somerset update – Emailed to all

Poster to promote Mendip Slinky Bus – Clerk displayed on notice board and Facebook pages

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

The Clerk read out 3 Memorials applications for:

Priscilla Ruth Thomas

Norma Lecretia Cooper

Howard Edmund Moore

Councillors agreed that they should all be approved.

Action: Clerk to notify the applicants

There has been a request to help the Food store to set up a small committee to help manage the accounts.

Action: Cllr Ham to liaise with the representatives of the Food store and report back.

21. Date of Next Meetings:

Wed 27th January 2021 Planning meeting

Wed 10th February 2021 Parish Council Meeting