

# Parish Council of Coleford

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## Newsletter for September 2020

### Councillor Resignation

The Council was saddened to receive a letter of resignation from Councillor Nick Harding. The time that Nick has given to the Council has been very much appreciated and we wish him all the best for the future.



In light of the resignation it now means that we will have a Councillor vacancy. If anyone is interested in finding out more about the role then please do get in touch with the Clerk who will be happy to explain what is involved.

### PCSO report

PC 1709 Toni Lines has taken over as the new Beat Manager at Frome Police station working with Sgt Rachel Clark, joining the rural Neighbourhood policing team. We have arranged to meet with Toni to discuss issues that we have in our village and hope to develop a positive relationship for the future.

### Planning Applications

2020/1377/VRC - Application to vary condition 2 of planning approval 2017/0600/FUL for the demolition of existing garage building and development of proposed convenience store and 1 dwelling house with associated external works.

Crossway Garage, Anchor Road, Coleford, BA3 5PG



It was noted that this was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time that an application had been submitted to vary the permission already granted. This application was to reduce the size of the storage area and should not reduce the retail area. The Parish Council all agreed that they had no objection to the application providing it doesn't increase the number of daily deliveries to the store.

It was also agreed that the Clerk would write to the developer to ask them to confirm that the Post Office counter will be incorporated as part of the store.

### Highways

The potholes along Springers Hill and potholes and pooling at Stoke Bottom by the Fairy Cave junction have been marked up for repair. Drain clearance/ sucking along Charlton Rd has been witnessed. If you notice any issues on the village highways then please report to the Clerk or you can log the problem direct onto the Somerset Highways website <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-pothole-or-road-defect/>

### Play areas

The Parish Council is pleased to say that some extensive improvements, which were approved last autumn, have finally been completed. This included upgrading some of the older surfacing at Highbury play area and Roman Way. Other routine maintenance was also undertaken which means all of the play areas are now in good shape.



Our next project is to make some improvements to the hard courts. We have agreed a supplier for new combination goals and basketball hoops and are currently seeking quotes to repair the fencing which it is hoped will give the area a new lease of life.

It is unfortunate that it's not all good news. Earlier this month the Parish Council had to pay for a professional company to clean and sanitize a section of Goodeaves play area, This was due to a child choosing to use it as a toilet which had resulted in the area being closed off whilst waiting for the contractor to come and complete the job. Can all parents remind their children that this is not acceptable behaviour. It is a shame that a minority are putting others at risk and potentially spoiling their time at the play area.



**Date of Next Meetings:**

Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 Planning Meeting  
Wed 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Parish Council 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](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com)  
Check out the website [www.colefordsomerset.info](http://www.colefordsomerset.info)**

*Philip Ham, Chairman*

## Somerset County Council and Mendip District Council Reports

### Somerset County Councillor report

County Cllr Ham reported as follows:

**Corona Virus Update:** Whilst every death is undoubtedly an absolute tragedy, the situation in Somerset has been throughout the pandemic relatively quiet compared to the rest of the Country. As at 25th August, the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 1,373 and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 203. There was one further Care Home death in late July and the current number of total deaths across the County is currently 4% below the 5-year average. The latest R value for Somerset is between 0.8 and 1.1.

**Return to School:** Children are expected to return to school over the next two weeks with the clear message from Somerset's head teachers that they are ready and can't wait to welcome the pupils back. Measures being put in place vary from school to school but include: Year group or class group bubbles; one-way systems; regular hand sanitizing and cleaning of spaces; desks organised in rows all facing the front and spaced out; outside areas divided into 'zones', which are allocated to specific groups of children plus staggered start and finish times.

**Return to School and College Transport:** SCC is following current Government guidance in relation to school and college transport. Parents and students are being advised to walk, cycle or be driven to school or college where possible. For those that use school transport Students are advised to sit with their year group and are strongly advised to wear face coverings on the bus. For college transport, routes where additional capacity is needed, SCC are laying on approx. 20 additional buses at peak times. Details are at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/schooltransport Covid 19>

**Parish and Towns Forum:** SPARK is hosting a Forum along with SALC on the 15th September aimed at Parish & Town Councils. It will be an opportunity to showcase some of the councils in Somerset who really engaged in the Covid-19 response in their communities, coordinating local efforts and experimenting with new ways of working. SPARK and SALC are hoping that this will initiate a conversation about how Parishes can work better with the communities they serve and capitalise on the volunteering legacy from Covid-19. To register go to [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwvduqqz4tEtdXYBab\\_pbWDMGESkYf5Y7I](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwvduqqz4tEtdXYBab_pbWDMGESkYf5Y7I)

**One Somerset:** The business case to move to a Single Unitary authority across Somerset is available on [www.onesomerset.org.uk](http://www.onesomerset.org.uk) and details the reasons for the recommendations and the substantial benefits to the residents of Somerset. The business case was approved by Full Council on the 29th July for submission to the Secretary of State. Engagement and consultation activities on One Somerset will continue through the later summer and autumn.

**Public Health Nursing:** SCC's Public Health Nursing service has been nationally acclaimed by the Institute for Health Visiting for the innovative online support developed during lockdown – a time when face-to-face appointments were no longer possible. Health Visitors, who as part of their role visit new parents after having a baby, had to adopt big changes to the way they work to enable them to deliver services to new parents to offer much needed support advice and guidance, weigh-ins for new babies, antenatal, post-natal and infant feeding support and other essential contacts.



**Somerset Youth Music Group:** Thanks to a unique online project, Somerset's musical groups including students from 32 of the county's schools and colleges have put together a stunning a recording of Elbow's One Day Like This. 90 young people, with ages ranging from 8 to 21 took part. Organised by Somerset Music, the video features the Somerset County Youth Choir, Somerset County Youth Orchestra and Somerset County Youth Concert Band. The inspirational video can be found at <https://somersetnewsroom.com/2020/08/26/somerset-pupils-scale-musical-heights-with-one-brilliant-recording/>

**Armed Forces Covenant Recognition:** SCC has been awarded the Silver Award in recognition of the Council's support for the Armed Forces community. The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation to those who serve or have served that we will do all we can to ensure they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. The Covenant seeks to ensure fair treatment for Regulars, Reservists, Veterans and their immediate families. Silver Award winners must actively demonstrate that servicemen and women, and their families, are not treated unfairly because they are serving in the Forces and must have an internally publicised positive Human Resources policy on employing Reservists. Further information can be found at <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant>

## **Mendip District Councillors report**



District Cllr Townsend confirmed that most of his activities this month had been dominated by the Gladman Planning application for 63 houses off Anchor Rd. Within a week of being notified that the Officer recommendation was to Accept, with rapid support from our consultant Mark Reynolds of Context Planning, a 28 page brochure was compiled to challenge the Planning Officers conclusions.

The main issues were Mendip's wrong interpretation of current planning case law (the Holgate judgement), the harm to the countryside, ignoring Mendip's new Corporate Plan for a Greener Fairer Mendip, and most important to us, highways. The Brochure was hand delivered to all Members of the Planning Board and the issues were explained to them either on the doorstep or on their site visit. Despite our representations, Somerset Highways would not accept that the fact that their database, showing no accidents within 500m of the site over the last 5 years, is not a true picture of the dangers of the local highway network. The Brochure gave details of 32 separate accidents, compiled with great support from the Coleford Action Group

The decision of the Board to Refuse was tight, 6 versus 5, with 2 abstentions. The reason given was Harm to the Nature and Character of the Countryside, and highways was not mentioned. It is hoped this gives a good chance if it goes to appeal as you cannot conceal the fact that over 6 acres of greenfield site would be destroyed, together with 150m of mature hedgerow including a 10m high healthy semi mature Elm tree.

District Cllr Philip Ham said that he wanted to say a big thank you to Cllr Alan Townsend for all of the work that he put into defending the Gladman planning application. He gave a great deal of time to the preparation of the 28 page brochure, with many of the planning board members saying that it was one of the best that they had seen. District Cllr Ham also thanked Dawn Wines for also speaking on the night

District Cllr Ham said that during the Covid 19 outbreak Mendip District Council had already given £57 million in grants to support businesses and organisations.

The Stronger Somerset proposal was discussed in great detail and will go before Full Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> September for vote. Somerset County Council have submitted a 32 page document in response to the proposal.

A paper has been produced to address enhancing air quality, with the intention being to stop cars from idling their engines outside schools and reducing taxis from waiting with their engines running.

Somerset Waste are campaigning hard to raise awareness of 'Recycle More'. There is lots of information to educate and encourage public involvement with the new scheme.

It has been agreed that all events held by the third parties on Mendip District Council land has been suspended until May 2021.