

# Parish Council of Coleford

---

Miss V Watts  
Clerk to the Council  
Tel: 07971 516916 / 01749 880428  
Email: [clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com)

Gallant Hill Farm  
Foxcote  
Radstock  
BA3 5YB

## Newsletter for June 2020

### Parish Council business

In line with government guidance, recommended social distancing and self-isolation rules, Coleford Parish Council conducted its June meeting using 'Zoom' video conferencing technology. It is assumed at this stage that the June planning meeting and July meeting will also take the same format.



If you wish to join the meeting please do contact the Clerk using [clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com) or call 07971 516916.

### Planning Application 2019/2345/OTS for 63 Houses on Anchor Rd

Cllr Townsend confirmed that the response date for the re-consultation had been extended from 1st to 16th June as a result of pressure from Cllr Ham and himself. Councillors expressed their continued opposition and agreed a response should be made to Mendip District Planning Office on the basis of:

The only site identified for Coleford in the Emerging Local Plan is for 21 dwellings near the old Tip. This has to be balanced against Mendip not having an agreed Local Plan showing a forward 5 year supply of housing sites. As this situation is not definitive, to support its case the Parish Council will have to demonstrate that the development would cause substantial and demonstrable harm. We are confident we have a strong case based on:

- Inadequate Highways, despite lack of support from County Highways as they say they have no record of any accidents over the last 5 years - Councillors couldn't believe this and were asked for details of their specific experiences.
- Inadequate visibility splays from the site
- A fictional Travel Plan which has us all walking or cycling on suicidal local lanes, or very infrequent buses
- Landscape impact on a greenfield site with removal of 150m of hedge and rare semi mature Elm tree
- Sewerage issues unresolved
- Local housing needs not met
- No local work, so a need to travel
- Ecological harm not properly considered
- Contravenes Mendip's Corporate Plan for a Fairer and Greener District.



### Update on the Coronavirus and the support in Coleford



The Coleford Angels are continuing to help residents who are self-isolating with shopping, collecting prescriptions and dog walking. Parishioners continue to provide produce to the Foodbank which ensures that those in need are able to access the lifeline at this difficult time. Dagaroo also continues to prepare and deliver excellent quality meals to Coleford residents 5 days a week.

We were also pleased to hear that the PCSO's are making regular visits to vulnerable residents within the village which had been much appreciated by those individuals. Other groups were also making fortnightly phone calls to check in with vulnerable residents, which again is reassuring.

## **Review of Fees**

Both the Cemetery and Allotment fees were reviewed and it was agreed that a 5% increase would be implemented. The Cemetery fees would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2020 and the Allotment fees from October 2021 which will give tenants more than the agreed amount of notice of change. These fees were both last increased in 2017.

## **Date of Next Meetings:**

Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Planning Meeting
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Parish Council meeting

## **County and District Council Reports**

### **Somerset County Councillor**

County Cllr Philip Ham reported that One Somerset: This is out for consultation, it is about scrapping all district councils and Somerset County Council and forming one new council, giving back more control to Town and Parish Councils. This was on hold as agreed by all councils due to Covid 19 but South Somerset broke rank so Somerset County Council have had no option to continue with consultation. If you have any questions about the consultation please contact Cllr Ham.

Covid 19 is still the main business to occupy most officers at County Hall, the R rate has risen to 1 in the last week with several cluster outbreaks. However overall Somerset County Council have been praised for all the hard work and keeping the rate of infection low especially in the elderly community.

Active travel especially around cycle ways and footpaths has been highlighted by grants from Central Government to capture some of the habits that Covid 19 has changed. As always the flow of money is not straight forward, 120k now for quick wins in 1st round, 480k in second round for town centers (100k) for Frome. Then another 500k to be bid for next January - District and County Councils are already working hard to get schemes ready for any monies that becomes available.

Finance at Somerset County Council showed 99% of savings last year achieved with around 7.6 million underspend, this is seen as exceptional under the circumstances of 2 years ago. However the Corona virus is costing more than the compensation money being received from Central Government, and obviously not knowing what the recovery will be is worrying to everyone.

County Cllr Philip Ham reported that it had been confirmed that the recent spike in Covid 19 cases in the last week was actually due to a faulty machine. 72 people tested positive but when re-tested proved to be negative.

### **Mendip District Councillors**

District Cllr Ham reported that the last month has been busy, with Covid 19 still being the biggest issue. The council offices are still closed with most employees working from home. All meetings are now virtual, large or small.

CABINET: This included items on footpaths and cycle ways to reduce car usage with some funding from Central Government. A paper referring to the new Clear Air Act and its implications to our District, and also an updating paper on progress and this years intended workload regards equality. There were also actions agreed with the Cabinet from the work done by the Scrutiny deprivation group. Cllr Ham explained that he had a personal interest in all as he had worked on all of them.

**SCRUTINY:** There were verbal updates on how Mendip District Council had dealt with the pandemic from Chief Executive Stuart Brown and financial 151 officer Paul Deal, who spoke of the implications to 20/21 and 21/22 years financially.

**PLANNING:** The May meeting was abandoned due IT failures to notify all parties involved and has been rescheduled for 10/6/2020 with the June meeting on 17/6/2020. The planning application for the Eagle Inn will be discussed on the 17<sup>th</sup> June although it was recently granted an asset of community value by Mendip District Council.

**GRASS CUTTING:** This had been stood down due to Covid 19, but after several phone calls it has been promised that it would be cut week commencing 18/05/2020 but then it was announced that rewilding of the grass would be done in Mendip in line with reducing carbon footprint. Cllr Ham said that he had demanded a map showing where this was to happen, which eventually resulted in him being told that it did not include Coleford and cutting would start again very soon, this was 3/6/2020 but still no cuts have been made.

**GREEN WASTE BINS:** It has been confirmed that residents who paid for their bins on time will get a refund next year due to them not being emptied during April and May. It seems that bin collections seem a bit erratic at the moment due to day changes and staff shortages. If you have any issues and this continues then please inform Cllr Ham who will try to get it sorted.

**PARKING:** Somerset County Council have now got traffic wardens back working on the streets but Mendip District Council have decided not to charge for parking in the Car Parks until August when the decision will be reviewed. It has to be asked where the lost revenue will be made up from.

**FOODBANK and DAGGARO hot foods.** A big thanks must go to Amanda and Dagmar for these services, they have worked for weeks to help those in need in Coleford. Cllr Ham said that he knows that there are many others that have helped and made a big difference to so many, it is a credit to everyone.

**CAMPING:** We had unofficial camping in the bottom playing field a couple of weeks ago, Complaints were received for bad behavior. The Police were involved but did very little. The situation got worse and at this time it was understood that the campers were homeless with young children involved and lockdown. Child social services and the police were called again. To make it even worse they were driving a SORN car. Fortunately all ended peacefully.

**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*