

# Parish Council of Coleford

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## Newsletter July 2020

### Highways

Cllr Townsend reported that:

- 1) - Springwater Farm - damage to the pavement has been reported again with a photograph of the damage already showing after the recent repair.
- 2) - Dark Lane weight restriction – an email has been sent to Sara Davis of Somerset Highways who has a package of signs on order for installation to alleviate the problem.
- 3) - Preachers Vale etc Street lights - reported to Highways. It was noted that they are still not working although engineers have been seen investigating the problem.
- 4) - Pedestrian crossing lights old Post Office - reported and already repaired.
- 5) - Potholes – There is a need for inspection/repair of a pothole by the bridge opposite the Kings Head. The worst of the Charmborough Lane potholes have already been repaired.
- 6) - Signs - Highways have offered to clean off any road signs that need cleaning. We need to check on those that are obscured by foliage. Please email the clerk on [clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com) if you spot one that needs attention.
- 7) – Grass Verges - most appear to have been cut. If you spot any that have been missed please email [clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com)
- 8) - Charmborough Lane – Cllr Townsend invited Councillors and parishioners to report any recent accidents along this stretch of road to help support the Highways dossier against the Gladman planning application. Please email [clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com)

The following issues were highlighted:

1. Large pot hole on the Green (the old lane by Tweed Farmhouse) by the beech tree
2. Pot hole on the first bend on Luckington Lane
3. Damaged sign about 100yds back from Halecombe Quarry towards Soho – Actually in Leigh on Mendip Parish Council
4. Lorries are still using Dark Lane which is not appropriate. It was asked if the operator could stipulate a preferred route.
5. Drains still blocked opposite Farley Dell, opposite the Legion and along the High Street all of which have previously been reported.
6. Speed limit signs on Newbury Lane near the Farm both need cleaning.
7. The new sign warning of cows crossing is obscured by the trees.



These points will be report to Somerset Highways.

### Parking outside Coop and discussions with Somerset County Council

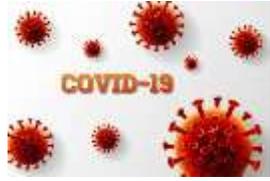
You will have noticed the arrival of some cones and signage outside of the Co-op. This is to protect the people using the shop as when the cars were parking there, pedestrians were having to walk the other side of the parked cars, in the middle of the carriage way to stay socially distanced from the people queuing to enter the shop. The Parish Council had received reports of near misses between pedestrians and passing cars which led to discussion between Cllr Philip Ham and Somerset Highways who eventually approved the use of the cones.

### Re-opening of the play areas

In line with government guidelines a risk assessment had been completed and detailed guidance notice has been displayed at each of the village play areas. Further pictorial notices will be placed at the play areas to ensure that the guidance is clear to all. The guidance is available on the Coleford Echo Facebook page and on the

parish website. Each of the play areas had been inspected to ensure that they were safe after the period of lockdown although the annual inspection had been completed by ROSPA during the last month

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



Cllr Ham confirmed that the support within Coleford continues to be outstanding with extraordinary generosity being shown in donations to support the Foodbank which is providing much needed provisions to families across the area.

Dagaroo is still providing excellent meals and is regularly selling out. The Angels continue to provide support to those on lock down who are unable to go shopping or pick up prescriptions.

Somerset County Council coronavirus hotline is still dealing with enquiries. It has also been established that in the event of a local outbreak it will be Somerset County Council that will deal with it rather than central government.

Cllr Ham thanked everyone for their continued hard work during the coronavirus.

### Date of Next Meetings:

Tues 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020

Planning Meeting (Please note that this is an amended date)

Wed 12<sup>th</sup> August 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 Philip Ham had circulated a detailed report by email. The key points of which follow:

**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 26th June, the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 795 and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 195. At 0.6, the R Value for the South West was the lowest of all English regions, with the national average being 0.7-1.0. Of Somerset's 200 Care Homes, only one currently has any Covid19 cases within it.



**Outbreak Management Plan:** Somerset's Outbreak Management Plan has been developed, agreed and will shortly be posted onto the SCC website. The Plan outlines the measure in place and the actions which will be taken should a local outbreak of Covid 19 occur in the County including Test and Trace. Public Health England rated Somerset's plan as exemplary and it will be used as a benchmark nationally.

**SCC Financial outcome for 2019/20:** Positive financial results and a major boost to reserves have put Somerset County Council in a strong position. In the last financial year, SCC increased its reserves to £76.2m across the board and delivered efficiencies that enabled a £6.4m underspend on the total budget.

**SCC Covid19 Finances:** SCC estimates additional costs of around £47m to help communities deal with coronavirus. To date the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group have reimbursed approx.. £6 million and the Government have allocated an additional £26m to Somerset. It is expected that a further Government award to help close the small shortfall will be made shortly. Major expenditure has included: Paying a 10% increase to all care home providers to help them stay financially viable through the crisis – £3.1m; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Government provides just 22% of the PPE required by schools, nurseries and key workers in Somerset,

Somerset County Council is funding the remaining 78% – predicted cost £6m; Setting up and running a new care homes in Yeovil – £1m each; Supporting nurseries and childcare settings to enable them to financially survive – £2.1m; Running

social care services seven days a week – £1m; Supporting District Councils with additional homelessness costs – £0.8m; Supporting our supply chain on major building projects – £2.3m. Plus a whole host of other costs that add up!

**Climate Change:** SCC have become founding Members of a new network which been established by UK100 to campaign on climate change. The 21 councils involved in the Network represent 14.3 million people in total, a quarter of the population (25%) and two fifths (41%) of England by area. The network is to focus on rural communities who face unfair barriers in trying to decarbonise – it is often harder to attract funding for projects which don't fit traditional cost benefit analyses and which often favour urban concentrations with less overall carbon reduction impact.

**One Somerset:** The business case to move to a Single Unitary authority across Somerset will be available on [www.onesomerset.org.uk](http://www.onesomerset.org.uk) from 7<sup>th</sup> July and will cover in detail the reasons for the recommendations and the substantial benefits to the residents of Somerset. The business case will pass through SCC's Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet before being considered at Full Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> July. Engagement and consultation activities will continue through July and into the Summer.

**Registration Services:** Birth registrations are now making a phased return in Somerset following the gradual easing of coronavirus restrictions. The service, run by Somerset County Council, had to be put on hold in March at the start of the nationwide pandemic lockdown due to Government instructions but now parents can book appointments to register the birth of babies born before 31

March 2020. The number of appointments will be limited at first, as safety measures must be put in place in buildings to protect the public and members of the registration service staff. With the service suspended for many weeks, there is a large number of births to be registered and parents of babies born after 1 April are asked to stay patient for now until more offices are open. Further

updates will follow – please check [www.somerset.gov.uk/births-ceremonies-and-deaths/register-birth](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/births-ceremonies-and-deaths/register-birth)

**Library Services:** Somerset Libraries are planning the phased re-opening of library buildings with the aim to start welcoming people back in July. It won't be business as usual straight away, however, and Somerset County Council's library buildings will look and feel quite different, as some processes temporarily change. Social distancing measures will be in place and a 'personal shopper' service will be available as customers will not initially be able to browse. Staff will be available to select items for customers based on popular titles, specific interests and favourite authors. Full details of which libraries are planned to open and when that's finalised will be available soon via the Somerset Libraries website ([www.somersetlibraries.co.uk](http://www.somersetlibraries.co.uk)) Importantly there will be no overdue charges as a result of items borrowed just before buildings closed on the 19<sup>th</sup> March due to COVID-19!

**Commonplace:** A new interactive online mapping tool has been launched to enable members of the community to flag up areas of concern in a specific area where changes to walking, cycling and travel could make a positive difference. This work aimed at building on a number of temporary measures, including pedestrianised high streets which have already been introduced to encourage

social distancing and positively support the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists. The map can be accessed at <https://somersetcovidactivetravel.commonplace.is/> An indicative figure of £482,000 for Somerset has also been published from the second tranche of funding where further new schemes will be considered.

#### Mendip District Councillors report

District Cllr Ham had circulated a detailed report by email as follows:



As chair of Scrutiny the last few months have been difficult, all meetings on line, empty offices, officers doing unfamiliar jobs, millions of pounds being paid out in grants and loans, however some companies who don't have rateable premises or work on the back of others have been unfortunate . I.e. Marquee companies, events and hospitality businesses. We have managed to rescue some but not all.

Scrutiny has continued its work around deprivation and Covid 19 has meant this work has become more important recently. The access group have been taking cycling and walking path paper through to encourage usage going forward into the new norm. We are also looking at the missing links on the old rail links Frome to Radstock and the Strawberry line from Cheddar through Shepton Mallett and on to Evercreech. We are also looking at Bus services, Mendip community transport with a survey going out to all parishes. All this work is being done so we have schemes ready to implement when government transport money comes forward promised for late autumn.

Gypsies and Travellers arriving in Mendip during lockdown has caused a lot of work, concern, and due to a letter from the Secretary of State confusion, as we all know none of us could travel, but they could and MDC had to provide drinking water

and mobile toilets....they had them come from Sussex and Surrey and stayed 12 days before moving on. It put local communities and doctors surgeries at risk, arguments are still going on!

Kilmersdon school has stayed open for key workers and vulnerable children all the way through including Easter holidays, recently joined by reception and year one. These classes with social distancing, classroom size and a split site meant the school was full! We are now looking how to get everyone back in September, it looks like it will be split times for different year groups, and updates will follow through weekly newsletters.

Eagle Inn at Coleford has withdrawn its planning application as the applicant has now challenged the Value of Community asset put on the establishment by MDC.

After lengthy negotiations I managed to get NO PARKING outside Coleford Coop on the grounds, with social distancing queuing and the increase in car movements as lockdown started to ease, those leaving the shop with parked cars they had nowhere to go safely.

And lastly Monday night MDC agreed to give the land known as Boyles cross back to Frome Town council after 46 years and said they are only too willing to return other assets anywhere in the district.

District Cllr Townsend had circulated a detailed report by email as follows from the Mendip Cabinet meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July:

**Finance** - an overspend for 2019/20 of £95k is expected. This is easily funded through reserves. This year will be a challenge with a forecast £4.7M overspend, with some £1.85m spent on COVID, and it is not clear how much will be covered by central government.

**Local Plan** - the Local Plan Single Review is scheduled to be submitted in September 2023. There will be a further hearing on Local Plan Part 2 by the inspector in September 2020 to review the allocation of 505 houses in the north west of the District.

**Social Housing** - It is planned to provide new properly affordable greener homes to rent. Funding was allocated for a due diligence exercise to examine Mendip owned sites for the potential to develop 4 or 5 for quick wins in partnership with a housing association.

**Weed Management Plan** - The policy to ban Glyphosate is not proving easy to implement as it is clearly the cheapest most effective solution. The search for alternatives continues, including involving Parish Councils in a community weeding programme.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Points** - Feasibility studies are to be carried out by potential suppliers to establish the best locations from a user and a power supply perspective. Initial plans are to install 4 across Mendip car parks. A wider County strategy is expected to be published in September.

**Parish Liaison** - a new head is being funded to work closely with Town and Parish Councils “to identify ways to work together to address local needs and aspirations” and to help deliver on objectives such as:

- creating a network of local walking and cycling routes
- encouraging carbon absorption, e.g. tree planting schemes
  
- encouraging people to buy local food
- develop Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements