

Parish Council of Coleford

Newsletter January 2018

Coleford Parish Email and Website



You may have noticed that the Parish Council email and website have been experiencing problems over the Christmas period. Can I ask that for the time being you use the new website address of www.colefordsomerset.info and email the clerk using clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Planning

2017/3323/FUL - Proposed creation of BMX Pump Track,

Playing Field Orchard Close Coleford Somerset

This application has been submitted by the Parish Council and so each Councillor had an obvious interest in the application so the Clerk had completed a dispensation to allow Councillors to vote. Councillors voted in favour of supporting the approval of the application.

Let's hope that the permission is given so that we can take a big step forward towards making the BMX pump track a reality.

2017/3222/FUL - Erection of two holiday lets with associated vehicular access and landscaping,

Kilmersdon Common Farm Common Lane Holcombe Radstock Somerset BA3 5QB

The Council listened to the members of the public who attended the meeting and after discussion agreed that the application be recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

- The visual impact of such a modern design is unsympathetic to the surrounding properties and is not in keeping.
- Two new 3 bed semis on this site would be over development of the area
- The proposed access is poor along such a narrow road. There is insufficient parking bays for a development of this type.
- There is a real concern over septic tank/sewerage/drainage arrangements.



Mendip Local Plan Part II: Consultation

Mendip District Council are consulting on a pre-submission draft of the Local Plan part two, between 2 January and 12 February 2018. This is the formal stage of consultation before the plan is submitted for examination by the Secretary of State. The Local Plan Part I was adopted in December 2014. Part two proposes specific housing and employment sites to meet its requirements. Part two takes into account the issues and options consultation last year which we responded to. The plan identifies sites which have a potential to deliver around 1500 dwellings in Mendip over the remaining plan period to 2029.

It was noted that some of the local green spaces which the Parish Council had requested be included within the plan had been omitted, most obviously Highbury Playing Field. The draft is being checked by the finance team who will cross reference the request sent to the Planning department in March 2017 against the new draft Local Plan.

Progress report on BMX pump track

Things are progressing well for the Pump Track. The planning application has been submitted to the Mendip Planning office and it is hoped that everything will be in place to start work as soon as we get the confirmation that the planning application has been approved, hopefully by 9th February



Wainwrights have agreed to donate Asphalt to the value of £3,500 needed for the surfacing of the Pump Track which is fantastic news. The Christmas raffle organised by Amy West and Christine Alford raised a total of £521.75 which was amazing and brings the total now raised to £17,108.21. We're still waiting to hear back about some grants but everything is looking promising at this stage.

It has been agreed that a track 2.6 metres wide from the gate apron to the edge of the pump track be installed, which will enable plant and lorries to enter the site without tearing up the surface. On Completion of the Pump track construction; this track will be re-compacted and the track will remain. The Council also agreed to purchase 2 benches and a litter bin to be sited next to the track.

The banks between the Pump Track and the boundary with Hillside Farm along with the soft areas within the track will require planting. It was agreed that the planting of a specialist wildflower and grass mix would be low maintenance, effective, of interest to wildlife and low cost.

Precept for 2018/19

It has been agreed that the Precept should be set at £40K for the coming financial year. This is an increase on last year but reflects projects that need to be funded.

Housing needs survey

All households within the village should now have received the survey. I would encourage you to complete and return the survey as this is your opportunity to shape the future of Coleford by helping to identify the type of housing, if any, that is needed.



Sites for Air ambulance night landing

The Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance are looking to locate and approve sites for use in an emergency at night in advance of having to use them. The Council agreed that Highbury Playing field and possibly the Doctor Surgery Car Park could be appropriate sites. They will arrange inspections to establish if you can be included as night landing sites.

Date of Next Meetings:

Tuesday 23rd January 2018 Planning Meeting

Wednesday 14th February 2018 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 clerk@colefordsomerset.org

Please check out the NEW website www.colefordsomerset.org

Philip Ham, Chairman.

Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council Reports

Somerset County Council Report - County Cllr Ham reported that:

- Three new school autism centres are to open next year thanks to £2 million of investment from SCC. Westover Green Community School in Bridgwater is set to open its new 14 place facility in January after a £700,000 investment. It will feature 2 large learning spaces, a smaller group room, sensory room, kitchen, office and an accessible bathroom to help students enjoy their education and receive additional support.

Later in the year a similar base will open at Holway Park School Taunton as well as an extended and refurbished base at Heathfield Community School also near Taunton. Together the developments amount to £2.3million of investment from the County Council creating 48 places for primary and secondary school children.

- In the recent Local Authority Financial Settlement the Government chose not to award Business Rate Retention Pilot status to Somerset despite it having the full backing of the County Council and the five District Councils. This decision has not been fully explained and unfortunately leaves the County Council needing to find a further £4 million of cost savings in 2018/19.
- The Highways team attended to 343 incidents over the Christmas period. High winds on Christmas Day led to numerous tree falls including a New Cross in South Petherton where 12 trees fell. Winds decreased on Boxing Day but there was heavy rain countywide. Many minor roads and some major routes experienced flooding.
- Thousands more homes and businesses in Somerset are in line for access to superfast broadband following a major Connecting Devon and Somerset expansion plan. The Governments Broadband Delivery UK agency has given the go ahead for CDS to increase access to the ultrafast broadband network being delivered by Gigaclear for around 20000 homes and businesses initially in hard to reach rural communities across Somerset. More information can be found www.gigaclear.com/connecting-devon-and-somerset-rollout-schedule
- Over 300 people have been supported to leave hospital sooner and average stays have been reduced by 5 days per person as part of the Home First initiative which launched in September. The scheme allows people to leave hospital rather than wait for care assessments and rehabilitation planning, receiving it at home or care home or community hospital instead. Since introduced Musgrove hospital almost 190 more patients have been able to leave hospital earlier to be supported at home and a further 47 patients are currently on the Home First pathway. This has also freed up almost 20 beds a week.
- A consultation for school admissions arrangements for children starting school during 2019-20 is currently taking place. To find out more or comment visit:
- <http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/AdmissionConsultation1920/consultation%20Home>

Mendip District Council - District Cllr Ham reported that:

- As part of Transformation 2 assets have been purchased. The first is a very large warehouse located in Chepstow, which has a tenant agreed for the next 24 years. The second is a very large retail premises in Swindon which also has a tenant secured for the next 20 years. These will generate good income of £1.2 million gross per year for the Council. There are more schemes in the pipeline.
- The Council has put together a comprehensive training program for the year which will be undertaken by both staff and members together for the first time
- The dispute surrounding the minimum wage and living wage has been resolved by Core Services. 1.5% savings to be made each year on the previous year.

- The 5 Council contract has been settled in principle. Printing and copying has been brought back in house in the same way as Licensing. This will save the Council 11.8% on the old contract so still a good saving.
- Fusion Leisure have given their report to Cabinet, which shows that they have invested £1 million more than they originally agreed. Take up on activities throughout the centers has been really good.
- The markets across the district are doing well apart from the Wednesday market at Frome.
- The Tax bases have been agreed and passed on to Clerks to enable Councils to make decisions on the Precepts for 2018/19.
- Mendip District Council has agreed their budget for the coming financial year which will see a small increase in the Council tax but no services will be cut.
- Recycling - 750 million plastic bottles are used a day. Cllr Ham has put forward a proposal that MDC should campaign for the district to stop the use of single use plastic bottles.
- Mendip District Council is consulting on the Pre-submission Draft of the Local Plan Part II from Tuesday 2nd January to Monday 12th February 2018.

District Cllr Townsend reported:

Recycling

The introduction of the Recycle More programme involving improved plastics recycling and 3 weekly rubbish collection has been delayed due to the need for vehicle replacement, staff training and most important to most of us is the publicity to make it clear what extra items can be recycled. Also on this theme the Council is urgently considering how best to restrict its use of single use plastics.

Climate Change

A lengthy 'brief' on the subject by the leader of the Green Party. Members were disappointed that this was a political rather than factual presentation and there was no opportunity for real debate. The Council remains committed to the LGA initiative on reducing CO2 emissions.

Local Plan Part 2 -Full Council agreed that the draft document should now go to final public consultation before examination by the Government Inspector. Its purpose is to identify specific sites for housing allocation and to record Local Green Spaces.

Planning Board

- A decision on a further 200 houses on the Wookey Hole Rd in Wells was deferred for the production of a Travel Plan to consider safe travel into the city and in the local lanes.
- West Pennard - an application for a retirement dwelling for a local resident was refused as it was half a mile outside the village development limits.
- West Pennard - an application was approved for three mobile homes for workers for a care home despite being outside the development limits

Licensing

The Board discussed the huge inconvenience caused to the District by the Glastonbury Festival and are examining ways of seeking some sort of payment from festival goers. Some variation on a Tourist Tax was considered.