

Parish Council of Coleford

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 11th March 2020

Present

Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Cllrs Banks, Conn, Evans, Turner, Townsend and Pearce.

There were 2 member of the public present and the Clerk Vickie Watts taking the minutes

Public Forum

PF1 The Agent for the planning application 2019/3016/FUL - The Eagle Inn Highbury Street, Coleford attended to answer any questions relating to the change of use and conversion of the public house to 6 flats. Revised drawings and statements have been submitted to Mendip District Council which is what is to be considered later in this meeting.

PF2 It was noted that at the February meeting there was a report of mud on Anchor Road. The Clerk requested that the road sweeper attended which it did on the 17th February 2020. Soon after some small rocks had fallen from a load along Anchor Road which has then subsequently been broken up and is now littering the road side. Clerk to request the road sweeper returns. VW

PF03 The sunk water hydrant is still a concern. Clerk to report again. VW

PF04 Thanks were given for the recent defibrillator training which was held @ The Hub. It was well attended and very useful.

PF05 As the work has now started on the new Co-op would it be the right time to ask for confirmation that the Post Office will be included as part of the development. VW

1 Apologies

Cllrs Allen, Barrett, Drescher, Evans, Hanney, Harding, and Talbot sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

2 Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

3 Approve minutes of the monthly Parish Council meetings held on the 12th February 2020

The minutes from the abovementioned meeting had been circulated to all Councillors. It was agreed that they accurately reflected the meeting so the Chair signed the minutes.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 2 Abstained

4 Matters Arising

All matters arising had been completed or would be covered under the agenda item during the meeting apart from:

- The camper vans have moved from Church Street however one is now parked in the Highbury car park.
- The food waste which was being discarded at Careys Mead seems to have stopped with the help of Mendip Enforcement.

- The Clerk and Cllr Barrett will prioritise the work on the Footpaths and arrange for either the Ramblers or the Community pay back to complete the work.
- The Clerk has spoken with BT payphones and Mendip District Council regarding the Careys Mead phone box. MDC had said that they had not received the consultation but BT confirmed that MDC had in fact signed for the paperwork delivered by BT. The deadline for the consultation was the 2nd March 2020 and MDC have explained that they did not have to consult with anyone as BT had done that. Despite asking the Clerk confirmed that she had still not ascertained whether the phone was going to be removed or whether there is any hope that it can remain. It is hoped that this will be clarified soon. Agenda item for April.

VW/MB

Ag

5 Reports-

5.1 PCSO report: The latest neighbourhood Crime statistics / recorded crime from 1st – 29th February are as follows:

- Residential burglaries - 1
- Non dwelling Burglaries – 0
- Attempted Burglaries - 0
- Criminal Damage – 1
- Theft from a Motor Vehicle – 0
- Theft - 0
- ASB – 1

5.2 Somerset County Council Report: County Cllr Ham provided the following Somerset briefing report.

SCC Budget: SCC Councillors have approved a £338m budget for its services with robust financial plans in place across the next three years. No cuts to frontline services are planned and the Council has improved its financial resilience by increasing its levels of reserves. The ambitious budget included:

- £1.5m to be spent installing 20mph advisory zones outside around half of all Somerset’s schools with the remainder to follow in 2021.
- £133.5m to fund infrastructure projects, including new schools and school expansions, as well as highways and engineering.
- a significant £6.3m investment into social care providers to help fund the increased national minimum wage for care staff, as well as ensuring high quality provision
- £4.5m to introduce a Family Safeguarding model to better protect vulnerable Children in the County.
- £2m to provide better access to bus services for residents living in rural areas including three new Slinky buses, a further nine peak time bus services and faster, more direct services from West Somerset to colleges in Taunton.
- An undertaking to maintain the authority’s General Fund reserves, vital to financial stability, at the projected end-of-year figure of £19.69m across 21/22 and 22/23.

The budget plans will see more than £775 million spent on services in the coming year and a 1.99% increase in the County Council’s element of the Council Tax. The government allows a further 2% increase for Councils to provide Adult Social Care.

Climate Change Fund for Towns and Parishes: A massive £1m climate change fund has been created by SCC –the biggest single investment of its kind in the country. The £1m pot will be available for parish and town councils to bid for green initiatives in their own patch as SCC acts on its decision to sign the national Climate Change Emergency Declaration which aims to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030 – with a commitment to find significantly more funding in the following years. More details will be published in the next few months with clear guidelines and governance.

Covid-19: Every winter our SCC’s Public Health and care professionals gear up for a busy winter in preparation for flu and norovirus, and now there’s a new virus – Coronavirus (or officially COVID-19). There are no positive COVID-19 cases in the South West, but SCC’s health and care services are well prepared with well-rehearsed plans in place to deal with any potential outbreaks. Covid-19 is believed to be spread from person to person through cough droplets. Simple basic

hygiene measures can help prevent its spread. This includes washing your hands regularly with soap and water and using a tissue when sneezing or coughing and throwing it away – the familiar ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’. Without a tissue, then use the crook of your arm rather than your hand. For the latest information, advice and guidance, check out www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public

One Somerset: Following his announcement in January, Somerset County Council Leader David Fothergill has now formally written to Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, kick starting the case for One Somerset – A Unitary Council for Somerset. This follows an independent report commissioned by SCC and all four District councils which was published earlier this year and outlines clear benefits of switching to unitary. It is expected that around £25 million every year can be made available to reinvest and improve vital services by cutting waste and reducing duplication.

Brain in Hand: A digital helping hand is about to be trailed in Somerset to provide tailored support for people with mental health issues or learning disabilities. Brain in Hand is an app that links the user with their carers and support teams. It provides people with their own specific ways to cope, with extra help on tap when needed. The app aims to increase a user’s independence by providing them with ways to manage their everyday life and negotiate a path that’s safe for them. It can give prompts and reminders and links to verbal responders or people’s own circle of support, who can intervene when asked, offering reassurance and the help needed to get back on track.

Children’s Mental Health: Somerset County Council is deploying two new teams to boost children’s mental health as part of its programme of support for children and schools available in the county. The initiative which has won £400,000 in Government trailblazer funding through the Fit for my Future partnership sees the Teams working in the Taunton and Mendip areas offering direct support to children and young people with mild to moderate mental health issues. The County Council, in partnership with Somerset CCG is now bidding for Government money to fund a wider roll-out of teams in Somerset. A decision is expected by September this year.

Utility Company prosecutions: Two utility firms have received significant fines after pleading guilty to roadwork’s offences. Somerset County Council brought action against Verizon UK Ltd and Western Power Distribution as part of its commitment to unauthorized disruption and keeping the public safe. Verizon UK Ltd pleaded guilty to one offence relating to unauthorized roadwork’s that led to substantial disruption on Taunton Road, Bridgwater and were fined £30,000 with £1,841 in costs. Western Power Distribution pleaded guilty to one offence relating to works in Kingstone, Ilminster which posed a real risk to the safety of the public and site operatives. They were fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £1,730 in costs.

Connecting Devon and Somerset: CDS has launched a fresh procurement to find new contractors to roll-out superfast broadband across the two counties. Working closely with Building Digital UK (BDUK) agency it follows confirmation of the Government’s funding extension for the programme– helping to provide a £38 million public investment in the region’s broadband.

- 5.3 Mendip District Council Report: District Cllr Ham and District Cllr Townsend gave the joint report. The main issues from the Full Council Meeting on 25th February were:

Council Tax – It was agreed that the Mendip DC element will increase by £5 a year for the average Band D taxpayer. This is exactly the same sum as last year’s increase and is the maximum sum allowed without a referendum. However when this was submitted to Central Government for endorsement it was discovered that one element, the Special Expenses Rate, thought to be an allowable exclusion from the calculation, had in fact to be included, which then meant the referendum threshold was exceeded. As a result an Emergency Full Council Meeting was called for Thursday 5th which agreed a new lower increase excluding the Special Expenses in time for the new demands to be posted out.

Capital Strategy – The previous administration had agreed a limit of £80 million for borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board for commercial investment to raise income to make up for the shortfall caused by the reduction in funding from central government. Council were asked to

approve an increase to £160M of which £50M would be for regeneration projects in the District. Concern was registered that the £50M must be soundly invested in solid assets that will provide a reasonable return.

Corporate Plan – The new Plan was formally launched. Its stated key Aim is “To build a fairer, greener and more vibrant Mendip that values our distinctive towns and rural communities”.

Climate Emergency – The public presentation on the County led programme for carbon neutrality by 2030 was held at Mendip on 15th February. Many questions arose, including the assertion that farming contributed a third of the greenhouse gasses in the county, and why was the carbon free electricity produced by Hinkley B not included in the equation? We were encouraged by Council to use green energy suppliers and promote tree and hedge planting. Involvement of Parish Councils will be promoted. Also measures to discourage car parking with engine idling are being pursued, particularly near schools.

Council Restructuring – In addition to the County led Unitary structure, Mendip wanted to look at the savings that could accrue simply from the 4 Districts working even more closely together. Council were persuaded that other options should also be explored including for example a relationship with BANES as Frome is clearly looking towards Bath rather than Taunton. There was much suspicion about the reality of the projected savings.

Anti-Semitism – We have been asked by Central Government to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition and include the principles in its way of working. Councillors were happy with the principle but without negating it in any way were concerned that to do so would put Anti-Semitism on a different plane from other forms of discrimination and voted to action the Equalities Board to review it in a wider context.

Somerset Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy - At the Cabinet Meeting on 2nd March a new Somerset Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy was agreed. This is the work carried out locally by Mendip’s Housing Options Team working with other agencies such as the YMCA. In 2020/21 MDC have secured Central Government funding of over £400,000 to support this work. Special emphasis is placed on early intervention and supporting the young, and ex-service veterans. The Mendip rough sleeper count for one night in the Autumn of 2019 was 13, the lowest level for at least 8 years.

Parish Workshop - Cllr Townsend attended the recent Parish Workshop at MDC. It highlighted areas of concern which was then honed down to 4 key areas, namely Community & Planning, IT, Natural environment and transport. 4 working groups will be held to further discuss each area in more detail.

5.4 Councillors – details of meetings attended this month

Councillor Ham attended:

As County Councillor were:

- 19/02 Full Council meeting
- 21/02 Meeting with Karen Churchill ref 5G
- 02/03 Kilmersdon School Governors meeting
- 11/03 Scrutiny meeting including budget and 5G

As District Councillor:

- 12/02 Frome Independent directors meeting
- 17/02 Full scrutiny meeting
- 19/02 Meeting with Mendip Bridleways and British Horse Society
- 24/02 Full Council
- 25/02 Access Scrutiny group
- 28/02 Apple Meadow View Leigh on Mendip meeting
- 02/03 Cabinet
- 04/03 Frome Independent Market
- 05/03 Full Council Extraordinary meeting

As Parish Councillor:

19/02 VE Day celebration
26/02 Coleford Flower and Craft Show meeting
Meeting with YMCA (Youth Club)

District Councillor: Townsend attended the following meetings:

15/02. MDC Climate Change Event
17/02. Leigh On Mendip Parish Council
20/02. MDC Neighbourhood Services Portfolio meeting
24/02. MDC Full Council meeting
27/02 Stoke St Michael Parish Council
28/02. MDC Planning meeting
02/03 MDC Cabinet
03/03. Holcombe Parish Council
05/03 Site visit to Holcombe & Coleford road issues with Somerset Highways
09/03 Meet Leigh PC and PCC and MDC re Church Yew Trees
10-3 MDC Parish Forum development

6 **Planning**

6.1 Decisions on Previous Applications –

There were none.

6.2 Complaints received by the Planning Enforcement Team at Mendip District Council -

There were none.

6.3 Update on the proposed Gladman Application at Lipyeate –

Cllr Townsend reported that despite trying to receive updates from the Planning Officer they had not been forthcoming. He will continue to press for an update and if needed escalate to the planning officers manager.

6.4 Present applications – 2019/3016/FUL - The Eagle Inn Highbury Street, Coleford, Radstock, BA3 5NT. Change of Use and conversion of public house to 6 flats - Use Class (C3). Revised drawings and statements received 24/02/20)

The agent attended the meeting and explained that the revised plans included some changes to an entrance and windows along with the number of parking bays being reduced from 12 to 8 to allow for more landscaping to the front of the property which MDC planning department had flagged up as desirable. The new number of parking spaces are in line with the Planning requirements.

He also explained that an economic viability statement had been supplied showing that a loss has been made over recent years. There is limited floor space and with the small amount of parking it would be difficult to make it work as a restaurant.

Councillors asked various questions which were answered by the agent. It was proposed by Cllr Conn that the application be recommended for refusal on the same grounds as the original application, namely that the concerns over the road safety are still an issue.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 2 Abstained

7 **Highways and Footpaths including**

7.1 Cllr Townsend Highways Report

It was confirmed that in response to Action 7.2 from 12th February meeting ref Newbury/Dark Lane – a site visit held on 5th March with Sara Davis of Somerset Highways Traffic Management, Mendip East. It was noted that the Unsuitable for HGVs sign at the crossroads outside the Works which should prevent vehicles turning right into Dark Lane. Driving along Dark Lane the narrowness of the Lane was obvious, but noted the drops off road at the bottom of the two dips. The Unsuitable for HGVs sign buried in the hedge opposite Luckington Manor Farm is clearly a waste of time and Sara is looking to put a new sign at Luckington Cross to stop HGVs entering the Lane. As Sara is now responsible for East Mendip area District Cllr Townsend took advantage of her visit to show her again the issues along Charmborough Lane. There may be scope for coordinating a weight limit with the restrictions being planned for Holcombe.

Items raised with Charlie Higgins:

- Stockhill - potholes by the 30mph sign
- Charmborough Lane - multiple edge erosions reported
- Brewery Lane - damage around two drains
- Common Lane - two potholes
- High St - blocked drains reminder

A meeting for March is yet to be agreed.

7.2 Items report by Councillors –

1. Where Brewery Lane meets at Lipyeate Cross there is a gap in the centre of the carriageway which could cause an accident if a motor cycle or bicycle tyre was to become stuck in the track. Cllr Townsend will investigate. AT
2. The edge erosion on Charmborough Lane is a concern as during the wet weather it is difficult to distinguish the extent of the holes. AT

8 **Finance**

8.1 Income: - The Clerk confirmed that the following income had been received:

Curtis Ilott	Burial preparations - Burford	£335.70
Curtis Ilott	Trevor Burford burial	£251.00
James Long (Masons) Ltd	Memorial additional inscription	£44.00
Total		£630.70

8.2 Bank Reconciliation – Cllr Banks checked the bank reconciliation which had been prepared by the Clerk in advance of the meeting, which was found to be in order.

8.3 Consider the Clerk Pension Actuarial: - This had been distributed prior to the meeting. It was acknowledged that this was a draft but a legally binding version will be received before the end of March which will require action. VW

8.4 Accounts approved for payments: - The following payments were presented for approval:

V Watts - Clerk expenses	£48.95
V Watts - Annual Web hosting & Domain	£124.21
HMRC – National insurance	£30.64
KSS CRC Ltd (BGSW Division) - Payback team Oct & Nov	£72.00
Unity Printworks – Frome Flyers VE day leaflets	£75.00

It was agreed that all invoices should be approved. The cheques were signed by Cllr Conn, Ham and the Clerk.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstained

9 **Update on Coleford Parish Plan Questionnaire**

Cllr Conn confirmed that he had sent the report to the people that had responded to the questionnaire and stated that they were interested in volunteering with a future plan. This was to give them an opportunity to comment. It was proposed that a date be arranged to allow parishioners to drop in and consider the responses received from the questionnaire and the report collated by Cllr Conn. It was proposed that the drop in session be held on Wednesday 29th April from between 4pm and 9pm. POST MEETING NOTE: Postponed due to the Coronavirus. Ag

10 **Update on Allotments at Orchard Close**

Cllr Townsend had done further research and recommended that professional advice be sought. PH/AT

11 **Update on burial preparations at the Cemetery**

This will be adjourned until the April meeting. Ag

- 12 Discuss and consider quotes to remove picnic tables at Goodeaves play area and installation of concrete base for new picnic table**
 The Clerk had received three quotes for the installation of a concrete base at Goodeaves play area. Quotes were received from Ben Windel, Richard Roch and Noel House. After discussion it was agreed that the quote received from Ben Windel for £250 plus VAT should be accepted. The Clerk to notify all contractors of the decision and thank them for quoting. VW
- 13 Update on the installation:**
1. Youth shelter. Cllr Ham said that Cllr Drescher has been helping with the renovations which will hopefully be completed by Easter. AD
 2. Football posts at Coleford play area. The Clerk to seek an update as to when the posts might be installed. VW
 3. Monohinge gate at Church Street footpath – Cllr Drescher had reported to the Clerk that Steve Burdett was hoping to complete the investigation and potential installation on Friday 13th March. VW
- 14 Update on VE Day 75 event planning to include whether to purchase trees**
 Cllr Ham confirmed that the leaflet had been printed and were in the process of being delivered to each house within Coleford and Holcombe.
- The play which was initially planned for Thursday 7th and Friday 8th May has had to move to Wednesday 6th and Friday 8th May as the Legion is being used for the Police elections. The change will be publicized via Facebook and On the Map. VW
- A budget of £1K has been allocated from Parish Council funds which will be used to purchase flags and bunting. High tea will be offered at no charge to parishioners over 75 but need to work out the best way to establish how many will be attending.
- It was also discussed that if a tree was to be planted this could be done by planting the tree in a pot at the event with the intention of planting properly in August which is a more appropriate time to do so.
- 15 Report on recent defibrillator training**
 The recent defibrillator awareness training was well attended and very informative. Cllr Conn highlighted:-
1. Should we have small info cards printed and distributed to parishioners providing information about where the Coleford defibrillators are located, what to do in the event of an emergency along with a QR Code which can be scanned with a smart phone which will then take you to information on how to use the defibrillator. It was agreed that the Clerk will ask Clive Setter of AED Locator Ltd if he is able to help supply the cards and seek quotes. VW
 2. Can we post a photograph of the inside of the defibrillator cabinet on the Coleford Echo / website to help familiarise residents of the set up. The Clerk will arrange for this to be done. VW
 3. Should we budget for the 4 yearly replacement of the battery packs which cost about £100 and for each machine? It was agreed that this would be included in the annual budget. VW
 4. Should we budget to add the “halo” to each defibrillator (Approx. cost £200 for each defibrillator) so that it has constant Wi-Fi contact with a number of people, or are we content that our guardians are ok with their responsibilities? The Clerk confirmed that Sharon Horler has confirmed that she is very happy to be completing the weekly inspections. It was agreed that the halo was not required at this point.
 5. Should we have the code access to the cabinets removed, leaving them “open”? This is common over much of Europe and often done in the UK, but Coleford has had one of the rare examples of theft / vandalism. It was agreed that the codes would remain in place for the time being.

- 16 Consider application for additional inscription to a memorial**
 An application had been received from James Long (Masons) Ltd for an additional inscription to the late Carol Winsley. The Clerk read out the proposed wording which all Councillors agreed should be approved. The Clerk to notify the Funeral directors of the decision.
Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstained
- 17 Meetings to attend / attended**
 10th March 10am to 1pm – Introduction to domestic energy efficiency and changing energy related behavior @ MDC Council Chambers
 10th March 6pm to 8pm – Parish Council Workshop @ MDC Council Chambers
 19th March 6pm to 9pm – Climate Emergency drop in event @ Wells Town Hall
 19th March 6.30pm to 8pm – Unitary discussion – One Somerset @ Frome Town Hall
 21st March 9.30am to 11.30am – NHS Fit for my Future @ MDC Council Chambers
 26th March 6.30pm onwards – Parish Forum @ MDC Council Chambers
 14th April 7.30pm – PACT meeting @ Trudoxhill Village Hall
- 18 Report of any risks identified**
 There were none.
- 19 Correspondence**
 Unitary frequently asked questions and myths
 Wanstraw Parish Council Clerk – Invitation to attend SCC Highways safety training event
 CPRE Newsletter & appeal
 Wonderful Villages photo competitions – closes 15/03/20
- 20 Matters of Urgency – at the Chairman’s Discretion**
 Cllr Ham said that Mendip District Council have indicated that they might be prepared to pass over the ownership of the green at Preachers Vale. This could be used to improve the parking in the area, sell off to improve drive access, remove trees and replant with some more appropriate for the area. It was agreed that Cllr Ham will seek draft of Heads of Terms for consideration. This will be an agenda item for the April meeting.
- 21 Date of Next Meetings:**
 Wed 25th March 2020 Planning Meeting
 Wed 8th April 2020 Parish Council meeting
- 22 The meeting finished at 21.40hrs**

PH
 Ag