

Parish Council of Coleford

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Gallant Hill Farm
Foxcote
Radstock
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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 1st October 2025

Present Cllr Ham (Chairman presiding) Banks, Evans, Fisher, Paterson, Pearce and Swords.

In attendance 2 members of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum

1.1 Cllr Paterson said that there have been incidents of parking on the pavement outside the old surgery making it difficult for those using mobility scooters or pushchairs to pass.

Action: Clerk to report to the PCSO to investigate

1.2 A request had been made asking if the car park gate at Highbury playing field could be kept locked overnight again.

Action: Clerk to ask the volunteers

1.3 Cllr Evans explained that the Chemist had been broken into again recently. Also, the opening hours are being compromised due to staffing issues.

Action: Cllr Ham to share the letter from the Chemist outlining the issues they are currently experiencing.

1.4 A new driveway has been installed off Highbury Street but camber is so steep that it has caused a wheelchair almost to tip over and the user is now having to go into the road rather than navigate the camber.

Action: Clerk to raise with Somerset Highways.

1.5 The Kings Head Defibrillator needs a new battery and potentially a new cabinet as it appears that rain has started to ingress.

Action: A sign needs to be added to the cabinet to show that it is out of order & post on Facebook.

2. Apologies for Absence (acceptance of any reasons offered)

Cllr Bell, Douglas-Burke, Moulding, Townsend and Will Mortimer sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

There were none.

4. Approve the minutes from the meetings held on the 10th September 2025

The Clerk had circulated the draft minutes for the meeting to all Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Paterson and seconded by Cllr Swords that the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and should be signed by the Chair.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention

5. **Actions arising from the minutes**

All actions were completed or would be dealt with as agenda items during the meeting apart from:

- The hedge at the Old Gospel Hall had become overgrown with ivy and brambles and is now overhanging the road but the owner had yet been identified.

Action: Cllr Pearce to establish who owns the hedge so that the Clerk can write a letter asking the owner to cut the hedge

- It was agreed that Cllr Ham will arrange a meeting with Nataliya Wills the Local Community Network Link Officer for Somerset Council along with Cllr Douglas-Burke and Cllr Moulding.

Action: Cllr Ham to arrange meeting

- Consider quotes for a new post for the Coleford Village sign
Cllr Ham to seek quotes for the newly renovated sign.

Action: Cllr Ham to seek quotes.

- Consider whether to accept the National pay award for 2025/26 for the Clerk
It was agreed that the National pay award would be accepted and implemented with immediate effect.

Action: Clerk to address the adjustment to the standing order for salary and pension after the new Unity bank account has been set up.

- Crops – Request for help with storage

The Clerk suggested the storage provided at the old recycling center and Ash Farm. Suggested small grant application will be open for applications for decision at the Parish Council in November. Total available for all applications is £2500.

- **Discuss and agree whether to progress with the Strimmer scheme**
Clerk agreed that a volunteer has agreed to take on the role and will ensure that the appropriate forms are completed before finding a course that will need to be completed.

The volunteer has submitted the application to Somerset RoW

- It was agreed that the Working Party group would get together to discuss the long-term plans for the 4 play areas.

Action: Clerk to arrange date for play area planning meeting

- Discuss speeding and the use of Auto Speed Watch
The Clerk explained that Autospeedwatch, did not record details during the dark hours. It was agreed that this would not be helpful to the issues in Coleford. It was agreed that a speed indicator device (SID) could be a worthy investment.

Agenda: Clerk to seek quotes for SID's with data capturing facility. Agenda item for the next meeting.

- 11.4 Report of any new issues
The Clerk had received an email from a resident chasing up the overdue repair of the bridge near the Kings Head.

Action: Clerk to chase up Somerset Highways.

6. **Co-option of Councillors**

There were no applicants to consider.

7. **Reports**

7.1 Somerset Council report

The monthly report had been circulated and would be displayed on the parish website.

7.2 PCSO

PCSO Will Mortimer hosted at 'Come and meet us' event on Sunday 28th September at the Hub. No report had been received.

7.3 Climate Action Group

No report had been received.

7.4 Report from Coleford Shedders – Consider budget

Chris Palmer attended the meeting and reported that the renovation of the Memorial Gates progressing well. They intend to delay the work on the rocking horse until the spring. It was agreed that details for the village entrance planters would need to be discussed so that this can be approved by Somerset Highways before work starts.

New members have joined the group so new larger premises need to be found. It was suggested that a temporary structure could be built between the changing rooms and storage sheds at Highbury playing field. It was agreed that a plan of what is being proposed would be provided to be discussed at a separate meeting.

Cllr Banks asked if the group would look at renovating the telephone box at Careys Mead. Chris said that he would take a look.

Action: Clerk to arrange meeting to discuss new premises

7.5 Report from Coleford Youth Club

A report has been shared with the Councillors and uploaded to the Parish website.

The group leader wanted to discuss access to the facilities within the kitchen. A meeting will be arranged with the group representatives and the Hub to discuss.

8. **Planning Applications**

8.1 2025/1590/FUL - The Eagle Inn Highbury Street Coleford

Proposed change of use and conversion of former pub into 3no. residential units (C3) comprising of a house, a detached bungalow and first floor flat.

All Councillors had the opportunity to consider the application prior to the meeting. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Banks that the application be approved subject to the planning officer looking at the parking requirements and that the electric charging points only being used for personal use, which was seconded by Cllr Evans

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention

Action: Clerk to submit decision to the Planning Officer

8.2 2024/1898/REM - Land South Of Suncroft Anchor Road, Coleford, Radstock

Reserved matters approval for details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference 2019/2345/OTS (Application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved for the erection of up to 63 dwellings).

Mr Mogg had provided a detailed report listing the issues outstanding as of 26th September 2025 date of submission of latest drawings and reports had been shared, which covered points raised by Somerset Waste, Wessex Water, Somerset Highways, Coal Authority, Lead local flood authority,

Designing out crime officer, Natural England and the Landscape officer, all of which showed that there are numerous points which have not been addressed.

It was agreed that the Clerk would work with Cllr Ham, Townsend and Mr Mogg to draft a response for submission to the Planning officer before 10th October 2025

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention

Action: Clerk to ensure a decision is submitted by the deadline of the 10th October.

9. Planning updates

There were none

10. Consider the 1st Draft of the Emergency plan

Carry forward to next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

11. Highways including:

11.1 Councilor update

Cllr Townsend submitted the following Highway report:

Diversions - the roadworks at the junction by the Vobster Inn caused dangerous and unnecessary diversions, which has been highlighted to Somerset Highways.

Somerset Future Transport Plan – Cllr Townsend said that he had submitted a response in a personal capacity. The Plan talks about sustainability and reducing the need for travel by private car and these should be prime criteria in planning decisions for housing development.

Issues with overgrown hedges – Somerset highways have said that the majority of hedges bordering the highway are in private ownership. Landowners and occupiers are required to maintain their boundary and it is recommended that any maintenance should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (1 March - 31 July). We request that landowners ensure that their hedge, tree or shrubs does not obstruct highway users nor obstruct visibility splays, road signs etc.

The Highway Authority can serve notice in accordance with the Highways Act 1980. They do request that the parish council raises any initial concerns in an informal way with the landowner / occupier first which generally works better.

Cllr Ham met with Somerset Council Traffic Engineer, Sara Davies and discussed the following points:

1. Parking at junctions: The situation at Careys Mead seems worse. Would the Council consider taking on an area by the phone box and creating a hardstanding for parking. Sara also suggested that the Parish Council writes a letter to all the local properties asking them to park more considerately.
2. Renewing the white lines, rumble strips and 30mph roundalls throughout the village.
3. 20mph for Church Street: Sara will look into this but it may be that different signage is required as 20mph is not enforceable and needs police support.
4. Newbury Manor School: Will look at more signage and renewing the rumble strips and will ask for more education through the school regarding driving safely in the lanes.
5. Floral planters at the entrance to the village: Sara asked for the proposed locations (What3Words) and size /design of the planters.
6. Vobster 20mph: This is being consulted on. Mells PC have approx. £10K to install. Police are not interested. Sara will be working with them on improved signage and chevron signs.
7. Leigh on Mendip school: There is a wish to extend the 30mph further out of the village and to stop parking from outside of the school.

8. Chantry & HGV access: Due to an accident at Railford Bottom an HGV driver was sacked and the company banned from the quarry. Heidelberg materials have agreed to provide new signage and extra instructions to all drivers using the quarry to stop them from taking short cuts. Sara will work with them and agree signage.
9. Kilmersdon: Parking opposite the Jolliffe Inn. Sara will be working with the Parish Council to solve the problems.
10. Other hotspots for accidents continue to be Terry Hill crossroads, the junction at Beacon Cross, the road width from Waggon and Horses Inn to Beacon Cross and the A361.

11.2 Discuss issues around Stockhill
Carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

11.3 Discuss speeding and consider quotes for Speed Indicator Device
The Clerk had received a quote from Elan for the Evolis solar powered speed indicator device (SID). A special offer for 2 units amounted to £5615.98 inc delivery and VAT

The Clerk had sent an email to Sara Davies of Somerset Highways to ask if the Parish Council needed to have the location approved by them and whether a memorandum of understanding needed to be signed but had not yet received an update.

Agenda: Clerk to progress. Agenda item for the next meeting

11.4 Report of any new issues
There were not issues raised.

12 Consider add a dog waste bin to the bottom of Beacon View
Cllr Fisher had considered the area and proposed that a new bin be located on the grass area next to the garage as shown on the map. It was agreed that the Clerk would share the map with Somerset Council to seek approval of a new litter bin at this location.

Action: Clerk to progress with new bin location

Somerset Council have agreed that the broken dog waste bin located to the rear of 65 Mendip Vale can be replaced by a litter bin at.

Action: The Clerk to provide a quote for a Topsy bin

13 Finance

13.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation
Cllr Paterson had checked the bank reconciliation and signed to say that it was accurate.

13.2 Update on Unity Bank
The Clerk had completed the application form which needed to be signed by all signatories and Cllr Ham needed to provide evidence of identity. Once submitted it is hoped that the account will be approved within 10 days.

13.3 Consider and agree quote for handrail at the Cemetery
Carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

13.4 Consider and agree quote for new post for the Coleford sign.
Cllr Ham to provide a quote for post

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

- 13.5 Consider and agree quote for play area repairs at Goodeaves
It was agreed that the Clerk would chase the 3rd quote to present at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting

- 13.6 Accounts approved for payments
The following invoices were presented for payment:

Vickie Watts – Clerk expenses	£ 249.56
Ministry of Play Ltd – Highbury Play Area repairs	£2,574.00
Adrian Guise – Coleford sign	£ 160.00
Cam Valley Wildlife Group – Annual subscription	£ 10.00

It was agreed that the invoices should be paid.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Cllrs Banks, Evans and Ham signed the cheques.

- 13.7 Notification of monthly payments made by standing order
The following invoices are paid during the month by standing order and direct debit:

LSJ Gardening Services – Ground maintenance	£1527.48
V Watts – Clerks Salary	£1152.90
Somerset Council - Clerks Pension	£ 353.88
EDF – Electricity Supply Changing rooms	£ 33.04

14 Promote the Small Grant Awards 2025

It was agreed that PCC grant should be moved from the Small Grants cost code to grass cutting to allow for the full budgeted amount of £2,500 for applications. All Councillors to spread the word and the clerk to promote on website and social media.

Action: Everyone to promote

15 Discuss and agree whether to add photos of Councillors to the website

Discussed and agreed that it should remain as it is.

16 Meetings to attend / attended

LCN Meetings:

28/10 Safer Roads for HGVs

29/10 Road Safety Event

13/11 Highways Working Group

03/10/25 - SALC AGM & Conference – Cllr Evan to attend

17 Correspondence

17/09/25 – Pennys. Confirming that leveling of the playing field will go ahead as soon as a site is available. If this is during the winter a temporary haulage road will be used to access the site and a road sweeper would be used to ensure the carriageway would be kept clean.

22/09/25 – SALC training sessions. Councillors to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend

29/09/25 – Defibrillator training can be provided by South West Ambulance Services Trust on Monday 17th November at 7pm at no charge. The training will last 90 minutes and will be open to all – no age restrictions.

Action: Clerk to confirm with provider and promote the event.

18 Date of Next Meetings:

22nd October 2025

5th November 2025

12th November 2025

Planning meeting

Small Grants Working Party meeting

Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 21.45hrs