

Parish Council of Coleford

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Gallant Hill Farm
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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Wednesday 10th December 2025

Present Cllr Pearce (Acting Chairman) Allen, Banks, Douglas-Burke, Evans, Fisher, Paterson, Swords and Townsend.

In attendance Somerset Cllr Barry Clarke and 2 members of the public present
The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes

1. Public Forum as

- 1.1 A resident raised concern that the pot hole on Vobster Hill has yet to be filled. Cllr Townsend has reported it and will monitor.
- 1.2 It was asked how much the CHCM subscription would cost in the new year. Cllr Townsend said that it was increasing from £8 per year to £9.00.
- 1.3 A resident asked what the latest status was with the Gladman application. No news as yet. Somerset Cllr Clarke said that the Planning Officer can continue to extend the decision date providing the applicant agrees.
- 1.4 A complaint was received regarding residents parking in the bus stop at Goodeaves. Agreed Clerk to report to the police.

Action: Clerk to report to the PCSO.

- 1.5 It was asked what was happening with respect to the levelling of the playing field? It was explained that Pennys are waiting for an appropriate site before work can commence. It was agreed that the current status should be noted withing the Parish Council newsletter

Action: Clerk to include in CHCM report

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

Cllr Bell and Ham sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest and Dispensations granted since last meeting

As a representative for the PCC Cllr Townsend declared an interest in agenda item 12.3 – whether the Parish Council should take on the church grass cutting in 2026/27.

- 11.1 As trustees for The Hub, Cllr Townsend and Cllr Banks declared an interest in agenda item 12.5 – whether the Parish Council should pay half of the hall hire for the group to meet at the Hub.

4. Approve the minutes from the meetings held on the 12th and 19th November 2025

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

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 3 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 letter circulated by the Chemist to be shared to all Councillors
Action: Cllr Townsend to share the letter
- Consider and agree quote for handrail at the cemetery
After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would contact PH Fabrication to establish if they will quote to make a handrail and install at the steps to the cemetery.
Action: Clerk to seek quotes for consideration at the next meeting
- 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
- A resident suggested inviting the Coal Authority to come to Coleford to talk about the mining heritage and to advise on what to do if there is evidence of collapse.
Action: Clerk to invite the Coal Authority

6. Co-option of Councillors

There were no applicants to consider.

7. Planning Applications

There were none

8. Planning updates

2025/1902/Full, Stockhill Coleford - The Clerk read out a letter which had been sent to Ros Eastman, Head of Somerset Planning which challenged the planning application of various grounds and the way that the land was initially undersold.

Cllr Allen arrived 19.23hrs

8.1 Agree whether to submit a Freedom of information request to be Somerset Planning to provide information relating to how much it has cost council tax payers on the Local Plan, Limited Update for the 505

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Fisher and seconded by Cllr Paterson that the letter would be sent to Somerset Council.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to submit

Somerset Councillor Barry Clarke stated that Somerset Council are entitled to request payment for the time spent responding to the FOI request, which was noted.

8.1 Agree whether to submit to Somerset Planning a letter of objection to the decision process of the planning inspector in approving the 75 houses

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Swords and seconded by Cllr Evans that the letter would be sent to Somerset Council.

Vote: 9 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to submit

9. Highways including:

10.1 Councilor update

Cllr Townsend submitted the following Highway report:

- Charity Lane/Mells Road - visibility and flooding,
- Soho junction - visibility issues,
- COLEFORD sign at Lipyeate missing,
- Cherry Gardens Lane - flooding/drain blocked by CGL Farm,
- Stockhill - drains blocked,

- Stockhill - 2 potholes/edge erosion on left.
- Lipyeate street lights - chased again.

10.2 Report of any new issues

The following issues were reported:

- Concern was raised over the number of hedgerows which contain fallen or cut trees causing branches to stick out towards the highway.

Action: Cllr Townsend to follow up

12 **Update on Community Car Scheme**

Cllr Townsend met with representatives of Mendip County Practice to discuss whether there was a need for a scheme in Coleford. Councillors agreed that a joint survey should be conducted but also in collaboration with neighbouring Parishes. It was agreed that Cllr Townsend would draft a letter to be sent to other Parish Councils inviting them to participate with the survey.

Action: Cllr Townsend to draft letter – Agenda item for next meeting.

13 **Finance**

13.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation

To be checked at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting.

13.2 Consider budget for a 2026/27

The Clerk had circulated a draft budget to all Councillors which had been prepared by the Finance working party, for the next financial year. Councillors were asked to give the report consideration and contact the Clerk with any questions or suggested amendments before the January meeting.

Action: Agenda item for the next meeting.

13.3 Discuss whether we should budget for a grant towards the church grass cutting in 2026/27. When issued in August it was agreed it was a one-off award.

Cllr Townsend requested £2700 be included within the 2026/27 budget to cover the current cost of the grass cutting. There is not a contract in place and there have been difficulties to keep a contractor due to the tricky nature of the work. After much discussion it was agreed that this would be an agenda item for January.

13.4 Discuss and agree whether a new post is required for the Coleford Village sign

Cllr Allen has inspected the post and suggested that it be treated with preservative but it is secure for the sign to be reinstated. The post should be monitored 6 monthly for any further deterioration.

Action: Cllr Ham to arrange for the sign to reattached.

13.5 Consider the requests from the Climate Group for the Parish Council to pay half of the hall hire for the group to meet at the Hub.

Councillors asked for more detail about the cost of hire for the group. This can then be discussed at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Ham to liaise with the Climate group to establish costs

13.6 Accounts approved for payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts – Expenses	£48.46
HMRC – National Insurance & tax	£194.57
PATA Payroll - Payroll	£48.46
Hillside Trees – Tyree Survey	£2016.00
Paul Gilson - Footpath warden North	£50.00
Alison Green - Footpath warden South	£50.00
Sarah Swords – Expenses	£24.15

Re-issue the following cheques which were cancelled by TSB during switch

Citizen Advice Somerset - Grant	£500.00
EDF – To cover underpayment	£68.86
Cam Valley Wildlife Group – Annual membership	£10.00

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Banks that the invoices should be paid. Cheques were signed by Cllrs Banks, Evans and Townsend

It was agreed that future payments would be made online rather than by cheques.

13.7 Notification of monthly payments made by standing order

The following payments are made by monthly standing order:

V Watts – Salary	£1181.64
Somerset Council – Clerk Pension	£ 365.23
LSJ Gardening services – Grass Cutting	£1527.48
EDF – Electricity at the Changing Rooms	£ 33.04

14 Meetings to attend / attended

There were none.

15 Correspondence

10/10/25 - An email had been received asking if there was a reason why a Christmas tree has not been organized this year at the Legion? A meeting was taking place at the Legion tonight when it was hoped that the tree would be discussed.

05/12/25 – Somerset Council Boundary review consultation circulated to all. Cllrs to respond as individuals if they choose to do so

24/11/25 – PCSO report. 2 x Arson and criminal damage, 1 x Burglary, 1 x Theft and 3 x Violence against the person.

05/12/25 – Pension valuation report 2025 shared with Councillors

03/12/25 – Thanks you letter from the Tuesday Afternoon Club also containing required receipt.

16 Date of Next Meetings:

14 th January 2026	Parish Council meeting
28 th January 2026	Planning meeting

The meeting ended at 20.45hrs