**Full Council**

**Tuesday 27th May 2025**

**Coleford Town Council Chamber**

**7:00pm – 9:00pm**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

**Cllrs: N Penny, M Cox, S Cox, C Elsmore, M Getgood, J Templeton, R Dix, D Stevens**

**County Cllr L Challis**

1. **Apologies were received from Cllrs R Drury, A Fullerton, P Kay, M Beard and K Robbins**
2. **There were no new declarations of interest received**
3. **To receive dispensation requests**

Cllr N Penny reminded members of his Town Centre Events dispensation. Noting, with regards to items 18 and 20 of the agenda that he does not have a pecuniary interest. However, he would not vote on these items.

 Members agreed.

1. **To elect the Mayor of Coleford for the Civic Year 2025/26**

**(Presentation to past Mayor (if applicable)**

**Note; Mayor to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

**Recommendation:**

**To elect Cllr N Penny as the Mayor of Coleford for the Civic Year 2025/26**

**Proposed by Cllr M Cox, seconded by Cllr R Dix and unanimously agreed**

Cllr N Penny read aloud the Declaration statement and signed Acceptance of Office.

Assistant Clerk, L Jayne signed the paperwork AS Clerk of the meeting.

Cllr N Penny thanked members for their ongoing confidence in his work.

1. **To elect the Deputy Mayor for the Civic Year 2025/26**

**(Presentation to past Deputy Mayor (if applicable)**

An email had been received from Cllr P Kay stating his desire to remain as Deputy Mayor for the Civic Year 2025/26. This was read aloud by Assistant Clerk L Jayne.

**Recommendation:**

**To elect Cllr P Kay as Deputy Mayor for the Civic Year 2025/26**

**Proposed by Cllr N Penny, seconded by Cllr S Cox and unanimously agreed.**

1. **Public Forum**

There was one member of public present (PM1)

Cllr N Penny introduced PM1, stating that they had 3 minutes to address the room.

Concerns were expressed about a letter received relating to the Forest of Dean District Council’s (FoDDC) Citizen Vision scheme, and the use of the organisation Sortition, for panel selection.

It was made clear that there was no direct link between Coleford Town Council (CTC) and Sortition and that no debate could take place due to lack of information on the organisation at the time.

The concerns about the organisation involved were noted, thanks were given for raising them, and it was advised to take the matter up with FoDDC.

Cllr J Templeton left the room.

1. **To agree the minutes of 13th May 2025**

Cllr M Cox declared the minutes of the 13th of May to be correct.

Cllr C Elsmore seconded, and it was unanimously agreed.

Cllr N Penny signed a copy of the minutes as a true and accurate account

1. **Matters arising from the minutes of 13th May 2025**

**Page 1:**

**Item 5 –** It was noted that the cycle planter is to stay in its current position. This will be moved if painting or maintenance of the wall is needed.

GAPTC AGM – It was noted that NALC can only advise and, following GAPTC guidance, a training mandate cannot currently be proposed. The Council urges NALC to lobby government, as part of any review of the Local Government Act 1972, for a statutory requirement to be included that all Parish and Town Councillors are to complete basic training in all relevant areas of Council, especially if services and powers are being devolved.

**Item 8 –** No further update was available re. Ambulance services in the Forest of Dean

It was noted that MP Matt Bishop attended a day with the ambulance crew and had no direct concerns.

**Item 9 –** Cllrs M Getgood, S Cox and M Cox have had initial call re. Citizen Vision.

**Page 2:**

**Item 11 –** Pre-application for cycle path extension: question asked on the status of the service road going into Coop.

**Page 3:**

**Item 15** - All community grants now paid.

It was noted with thanks, that the recently painted metal work has enhanced the town.

1. **To elect representatives for Coleford Town Council committees**

Planning & Highways:

**Recommendation: for all current Planning & Highways Committee members to remain as is, Cllrs M Cox, C Elsmore, S Cox, J Templeton, M Beard and R Drury**

**Proposed en bloc by Cllr N Penny, seconded by Cllr D Stevens and unanimously agreed**

Clock Tower:

**Recommendation: for Cllrs N Penny, R Dix, M Beard and P Kay to remain on the committee. To reach out to those members not present.**

(Cllr P Kay stated to remain on this committee by email request)

**Proposed by Cllr C Elsmore seconded by Cllr M Cox and unanimously agreed**

1. **To elect Town Council representatives for external Committees and Bodies 2025/2026**
* **The Halls Charity 4 Members**
* **Citizens Advice Bureau 1 Member**
* **Forestry England Advisory Committee 1 Member**
* **Stowfield Quarry Liaison Committee 1 Member**
* **Coleford Area Partnership MCTI 1 Member**
* **Bells Foundation 3 Members**
* **Forest Health Forum 1 Member**
* **Glos. Market Towns Forum 1 Member**
* **Wye Valley AONB 2 Members**
* **The Angus Buchanan VC Memorial Ground 1 Member**
* **The Wye Valley & FoD Tourism Association 1 Member**
* **Forest Economic Partnership 2 Members**
* **Road Safety Partnership 1 Member**
* **DVSA Forum 1 Member**
* **Coleford Twinning Association 1 Member**
* **Christmas Lights Committee 1 Member**
* **In-House Auditors 2 Members**
* **FoDDC Planning Development Control 1 Member**
* **Coleford Welcomes Walkers (CWW) 3 Members**

 **Recommendation: for all Cllrs to remain as is, other than the below exceptions:**

**Christmas Lights Committee: to elect Cllr D Stevens, with Cllr N Penny continuing support**

**Coleford Welcomes Walkers (CWW): to elect Cllr M Cox. Cllr R Drury to step down**

(Request to step down from Cllr R Drury received by email).

 **Proposed en bloc by Cllr N Penny, seconded by Cllr M Getgood and unanimously agreed**

1. **To note the balance sheet and income/expenditure at year end**

Noted by members

1. **To agree the Annual Governance Audit Return (AGAR) Statement 2024/25**

**Cllr N Penny read aloud each of the statements of the AGAR and allowed Council members to state yes or no.**

**All agreed with the AGAR.**

**Recommendation: to agree the Annual Governance Audit Return (AGAR) Statement 2024/25**

**Proposed by Cllr M Cox, seconded by Cllr S Cox and unanimously agreed.**

The Chair and Clerk of the meeting signed the AGAR.

1. **To agree the AGAR Accounting Statements 2024/25**

**Recommendation: to agree the AGAR Accounting Statements 2024/25**

**Proposed by Cllr M Getgood, seconded by Cllr C Elsmore and unanimously**

The appropriate section of the AGAR was signed by the Chair and had been previously signed by the Town Clerk / RFO.

1. **To agree the dates for the AGAR Exercise of Public Rights**

**Recommendation: from Tuesday the 3rd of June, to end on Monday the 14th July 2025 - in line with minimum period**

**Proposed by Cllr C Elsmore, seconded by Cllr S Cox and unanimously agreed**

1. **To agree the response to the External Auditor**

Cllr N Penny provided an explanation behind the Town Clerk / RFO’s letter and the changes year on year around boxes 3 and 6.

**Recommendation:**

**To agree the response to the External Auditor**

**Proposed by Cllr C Elsmore, seconded by Cllr R Drury and unanimously agreed**

1. **To agree payments**

It was noted that all Contractor invoices were correct and in line with tendered rates.

An explanation was provided and justified for the additional cost to Clock Tower works. This had been authorised by the Town Clerk under delegated authority.

**Recommendation: payments were agreed at £25,614.61 as per the payments listing**

**Proposed by Cllr R Drury, seconded by Cllr M Cox and unanimously agreed**

1. **To note cash books and bank reconciliations**

Noted

1. **To note income and expenditure reports**

It was noted that the figure set against the Grants budget code now needs to be moved to the S137 budget code. For the office to confirm the correct figure of S137 monies per elector.

**Noted and agreed**

1. **To review Direct Debits**

After having sight of the current direct debits, it was stated that CTC are to ensure they have the best value for money across all tariffs. It was also noted not to put Corona onto direct debit due to a history of ongoing issue with this provider.

**Recommendation:**

**Noted and agreed to accept current Direct Debits**

**Proposed by Cllr M Getgood, seconded by Cllr M Cox and unanimously agreed**

1. **To agree to the purchase of reusable plastic glasses**

Cllr N. Penny gave background on this item, stating that past funding had been provided from the National Lottery aimed at reducing single-use plastics and promoting educational initiatives around sustainability.

There is a flat-rate design fee, and a six-week lead time for delivery. The cups would be available for local events to borrow, with a suggested model of charging £1 per cup, which would be returned to the Council or relevant organisation / event as a fundraising contribution.

**Recommendation:**

**To buy 5,000 cups from the recommended supplier at £3,009 + VAT, with the Coleford Town logo branding. To ensure people who use them recognise the way that they are intended to be used**

**Cllr M Cox proposed, Cllr R. Drury seconded, and it was agreed by majority**

**Cllr N Penny did not vote**

Office to use delegated authority to pay the invoice, due to the 6-week lead time.

1. **To consider insurance renewal quote**

Deferred to mid-June Full Council meeting.

1. **To agree to hold an ‘all levels’ public surgery**

Cllr N Penny provided background to this item, stating the need to hold a joint Town, District, and County public surgery.

New County Cllr L Challis, along with District Cllrs P Kyne, I Whitburn, and C Elsmore are supportive of this.

First session proposed for September, then quarterly if successful.

For a one-page leaflet to be created and shared via all available channels, listing attendees and key information.

**Recommendation:**

**To agree to hold an ‘all levels’ public surgery using The Main Place as a neutral venue. Initial meeting to be held in September, then quarterly if successful**

**Proposed by Cllr N. Penny, seconded by Cllr D. Stevens, and unanimously agreed**

1. **To note the Q4 CAB report**

The Q4 CAB report had previously been distributed to members.

It was stated that CAB meetings are happening. However, these are fortnightly.

Value for money from CAB is good, although CTC are to challenge their meeting frequency.

Noted by members

1. **To adopt the Document Retention and Disposal Policy**

**Recommendation:**

**To adopt the Document Retention and Disposal Policy**

**Proposed by Cllr C Elsmore, seconded by Cllr M Getgood and unanimously agreed.**

1. **To adopt the Biodiversity Policy**

**Recommendation:**

**To adopt the Biodiversity Policy, but to review if relevant additional input received from community through consultation schemes**

**Proposed by Cllr S Cox, seconded by Cllr M Getgood and unanimously agreed**

1. **To receive update from meeting with Broadwell AFC**

A meeting was held between Broadwell FC, Cllr N Penny and Assistant Clerk L Jayne.

Concerns were openly shared around the cost of maintaining the KGV pitches, against the income received and pitch overuse. Broadwell acknowledged and accepted the concerns, offering to look into alternative solutions.

It was noted that they would turf any unplayable patches at their own expense.

CTC to await a formal response.

1. **To receive update re: Change of Use – The Hive**

After some discussion it was agreed to look into temporary event licenses for The Hive.

1. **To receive update on NDP**

Cllr M Cox provided an update on this item, stating that the steering group now has 11 members, including Councillors and community members with varied skills.

Theme group dates have been shared. However, only three attended the last session despite wide publicity.

To put together something that can be dropped in and looked at to get feedback / consultation on specific areas.

Noted

1. **To note minutes from Clock Tower Committee**

DHVA asked to look at how the scheme can be broken down into smaller chunks, in order to be able to apply for smaller pots of funding.

Noted

1. **To note minutes from Planning and Highways Committee**

Cllr M Cox updated the room, noting the car parking issues on Boxbush Road.

It was stated that GCC Highways N Choat was to carry out a walk around of the Town with new County Cllr L Challis.

Noted

1. **To note District and County Councillor reports**

**County Cllr L Challis:**

County Cllr L Challis introduced herself to the room, giving a brief history of her background and connection to the Forest of Dean. A summary of the work that she had began working on was provided, including the undertaking of training and attending many meetings, such as with GCC Highways and School heads.

Cllr N Penny thanked L Challis and welcomed her to future meetings.

**County Cllr C Elsmore:**

An update was provided on the recent FoDDC Annual meeting, where the election of Chairman was agreed.

Now awaiting Local Plan.

1. **To note Members reports**

**Cllr N Penny:**

A busy month attending and preparing events.

It was noted that the Annual Assembly had a good turn out with 25 people.

30th April met with Mayor's Cadets to review St George's Day and discuss charity fundraising

2nd May met, along with Laura Jayne, members of Broadwell youth AFC re use of King George V grounds

6th May attended GAPTC Local Government Review working group

7th May met with Berry Hill RFC Junior section re 2026 visit to St Hilaire de Riez

8th May visited our 4 Second World War graves to pay my respects

8th May organised and attended the VE Day 80 Service of Remembrance in the Town Centre

9th May met with Insp Nick Cook re police incidents in Coleford

9th May meeting regarding the Emergency Services Showcase event on the 9th August

10th - 18th May supported the running of the Coleford Area Walking Festival

17th May volunteered in the Tourist Information Centre

17th May attended the Forest Musical Bursary Concert at Coleford Baptist Church

18th May represented Town and Parish Councils at the Our Forest Forum event

23rd May met with Broadwell Youth AFC re use of King George V

**Cllr D Stevens:** increasing his involvement within the Council.

**Cllr R Dix:** arranging another Guitar show, as a free event.

**Cllr M Getgood:**

Cemetery: Heart of the Forest School teenagers clearing graves and excess Holly or brambles around the yews.

Conservation work with FE or at Worcester Walk.

Attendance at a Forest Forum event & NDP steering group, Annual Assembly, VE Day event, led a short walk for the CAWF.

**Cllr C Elsmore:** attended CTC’s Annual Assembly

**Cllr S Cox:** attendedsteering group meeting and Natural Environment theme group.

Attended VE Day service, which received positive feedback.

Arranged and carried out various walks for the Walking Festival. Thanks was given to Coleford Area Partnership and CTC for their parts in this.

Attended a Coleford Welcomes Walkers meeting – kick start committee to become more active.

**Cllr M Cox:**

AttendedVE day, noting that another service has been requested for VJ day. Cllr N Penny asked Cllrs for ideas on this.

Attended the food event by 3 traders, which was successful.

Work on Walking Festival. It was noted that the selling of tickets through the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) benefitted the festival.

Continued CNDP work.

1. **To note Clerks Report**

Noted

1. **To note Correspondence**

Re. collab: Cllrs can look and feedback direct. Not specific for CTC to feedback.

**Meeting end: 20.48**