

# WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

## Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Cllr Bennett - Chair

Cllr Cockrem

Cllr Griffiths

8 Members of the General Public

Cllr Cawley

Cllr Coleman

Clerk: Kim Duller

- 23/1050 Election of Chairman and Declaration of Office:** Cllr Mark Bennett was proposed as Chair by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Cawley, all in favour. **Resolved.** Cllr Bennett accepted Office.
- 23/1051 Resignations:** Cllr Coleman. Her last meeting will be June 23.
- 23/1052 Election of Vice Chairperson and Declaration of Office:** Cllr Cockrem was proposed by Cllr Mark Bennett, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, all in favour. **Resolved.** Cllr Cockrem accepted office.
- 23/1053 Councillors, Declaration of Office:** Cllrs Cawley and Griffiths accepted office. **Resolved.**  
**Clerk to confirm with Cllr Partridge.**
- 23/1054 Election of Committee Representation:** 1. Cllr Bennett, PC representative on Playground Committee: **Resolved.** 2. Cllr Partridge, Lead Member planning. **Resolved.** 3. Cllr Partridge, Lead Member Quarry Farm Allotments: **Resolved.** 4. Cllr Cockrem, Lead Member Footpaths and Environment **Resolved.** 5. Cllr Griffiths, Lead Member LCNs. **Resolved.**
- 23/1055 Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO):** Kim Duller, Clerk, proposed by Cllr Bennett. All in favour. **Resolved.**
- 23/1056 Appointment of Internal Auditor:** Neil Cochran kindly agreed to continue with the role of Internal Auditor. **Resolved.** **The Clerk and Chair thanked Neil for his support throughout the year.**
- 23/1057 ROI and Elected Office Forms for Councillors including: 1. Review of Registration Form and 2. Acceptance of Office, to be returned to Clerk within 28 days of the meeting. These will be published on the SCC website.**
- 23/1058 Co-option of New Councillor's:** Continue to promote within the village. 2 Vacancies.
- 23/1059 Chairman's Address: Summary of Address:** Being a Parish Councillor is all about doing the very best we can for the residents in our villages. There is no political or personal influence on any of our decisions. We live in beautiful villages and there is a good sense of community spirit. We have seen more instances of low-level vandalism and this is an area we are seeking to tackle in the future. The feedback following the installation of the new play equipment at the Recreation ground has been fantastic, and although I consider it to be a small project, it has had a major impact and is definitely encouraging more usage of the recreation ground and getting whole families outside together. The Parish Council is looking forward to enhancing the Recreation Ground even further in the future after the publication of the recent survey results in June, in order to increase opportunities for all ages to access the recreation. *Something for "everyone"*. It is positive to see the number of new residents moving in to the villages and I hope that they will be able to embrace the community spirit which exists; including potentially joining the Parish Council and other local organisations in the villages. It was sad to hear the Gardening club had disbanded, but I hope that other village organisations will be able to continue to thrive. Planning issues have kept the Parish Council "busy" during the past year. I hope that we will be able to attract more families in to our villages to support our school and pre-school and the vibrancy that villages need to continue to be sustainable. We need to keep the village "alive" and "inclusive" for everyone.

The Coronation party was a great success and was a brilliant demonstration of the strength of community spirit in our villages. Thank you to everyone who was involved in organising the events. I would like to thank all Councillors, the Clerk, residents, local organisations and businesses, volunteers and those in the background, who work so hard and contribute to making our villages such a wonderful place to live.

**Public Forum:** i. **Allotments Youth Shelter:** Repairs outstanding, including an increase in rubbish left in and around the Youth shelter area. **Action Cllrs Bennett and Cawley to inspect and decide how to solve the issue.** ii. **Allotments, broken taps, not repairable anymore:** Cllr Cawley to purchase new taps and fixtures to the value of £50.00 and refit.

23/1060

**Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Partridge previously notified to the Chair.

23/1061

**Declarations of Interest:** i) Cllr Cawley, Allotments. ii) Cllr Coleman, any footpaths on Broadstone Farm land and iii) Planning application 23/00801 Broadstone Farm iv) Cllr Bennett, Playground Committee.

23/1062

**To approve and sign as correct the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12.04.2023. All in favour. Resolved.**

**Amendments:** "Public Forum: None comments". Change none to "no"

23/1063

**Matters arising, not on agenda: None.**

23/1064

**Core Polices Review: Action, carry forward to next meeting to enable further consideration of the newly recommended revised Councillors Code of Conduct policy.**

23/1065

**Supplementary Polices Review:** Carry forward to June.

23/1066

**Annual Attendance Review:** All Councillors have a record of good attendance in line with National Guidance.

23/1067

**SSDC Councillors Reports: 1.** Clerk had previously circulated the monthly **Newsletter.**

**2.** Email relating to **Chinnock Hollow Closure:** Cllrs Patrick and Hewitson indicated a decision in late May. (No confirmed date). **3. New Salt Bin:** The Chair thanked Cllr Hewitson for the new Salt bin which he has purchased for Smiths Hill. **4. Impact of A30 Closure.** Cllr Hewitson asked the Parish Council to consider the impact of the closure and any potential impact it may have on village Roads vis a vis, increase in traffic. He explained that he and Cllr Patrick are having meetings with the SCC Highways team to discuss road diversion signage and encouraged feedback from residents and the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk to publicise and ask for feedback to go to either PC or direct to Cllrs Patrick and Hewitson, in particular the use of "unofficial" diversion routes. He stressed the importance of addressing the issue now.**

**Asset Register:** A new Asset Register is being compiled by the Parish Council, which will increase the scope of the existing register.

**Risk Assessment: Carry Forward to June Meeting.**

23/1068

**Planning:**

**a. Applications: 23/00801/FUL at Broadstone Farm Middle Chinnock Road Middle Chinnock:** Large Slurry Tank. The Clerk explained the background to the application, including the statutory element for farms to conform to new Slurry Tank regulations. A vote was taken, all Members in favour. **Resolved.** **Action: Clerk to confirm decision to SCC planning team.**

**b. Determinations: Quarry Cottage: Quarry Cottage, Scott's Way 23/00148/HOU.** Approved with conditions, including ancillary accommodation and usage.

**c. Planning enforcement:** Appeal, 2 Ridgway, West Chinnock. Result TBA. No objections by the Parish Council or residents, current appeal relates to SSC objection.

**d. Planning Queries:** None

**Finance:**

- a. **To Approve 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Accounts 2023:** Inspected by the internal auditor, Neil Cochran. No comments. **Proposed by Cllr Cockrem. All in favour. Resolved.**
- b. **To Receive report from Internal Auditor 22/23 Accounts:** Report given by Neil Cochran, all in order. **Action: Clerk and Internal Auditor to meet to set up new “SMART” spread sheet for 23/24 accounts.**
- c. **To Approve Accounting Statement:** Approved by Chair and Clerk and Minuted.
- d. **To Approve Annual Governance Statement: Resolved.** Signed by the Clerk and Chair and Minuted. No variances. Bank Reconciliation completed.
- e. **Agreement to the certificate of Exemption (AGAR 22/23):** Signed by the Internal Auditor, Clerk and Chair. **Action: To be submitted by the Clerk.** The Clerk explained that in 2024 the PC will not be able to apply for a Certificate of Exemption as the Income and expenditure will exceed the threshold of £25,000. This is due to the grant for the new play equipment and the movement of funds (including VAT), in and out. VAT however is reclaimable.
- f. **To Approve 23/24 Parish Council Budget:** The Clerk had previously circulated the final budget and budget statement to Members. **Proposed Cllr Cockrem. All in Favour. Resolved.** **Action: Clerk to send a copy to Neil Cochran, Internal Auditor.**
- g. **To Approve Parish Council Annual Insurance quote from BHIB, £547.10, previous year £517.81:** Clerk had reviewed VFM and although the price had increased, this was relative to the increase in the cost of risk. The company is a specialist PC Insurer and provides good, timely advice when queries are made. **Resolved** to pay, all in favour.
- h. **To pay any routine or previously agreed invoices:**
  - i. **SLL Grass Cutting April 2023.** There were queries raised relating to the timing of the cuts before payment is made. **Action: Clerk to query with SLL.**

**Allotments: Cllr Partridge not in attendance**

- a. **Inspection 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023:** Confirmed with Tenants via Email. **Action: Clerk to create a “reminder poster” with timings. Cllr Cawley to display 2 copies on the Allotment gates. Neil Tinkley also taking an overhead photo.**
- b. **Rent Review:** C/F to June meeting
- c. **Update on Tenancy Agreements Payment:** Nearly all Tenants paid, Clerk chasing outstanding payments.
- d. **Remedial Inspections:** To be included as part of 23 inspection.
- e. **Plot Vacancies:** Plot 20d still vacant. **Action: Cllr Cawley to organise strim and then weed cover on the plot whilst it is still vacant to prevent weeds going on to other plots. Cllr Cockrem to potentially support Cllr Cawley. Cllr Cawley/Cllr Partridge to provide ¼ plot measurements to Cllr Cockrem and Cllr Bennett.**

**Matters arising from the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023 meeting:**

- a. **Speed Signage:** Clerk meeting with Gary Warren (New project manager) on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May to move the project forward as it has come to a standstill.
- b. **Dog Fouling Update:** Signage increased, but more to be put up by Cllr Cawley. Clerk has publicised issues on social media. Weekly support and visits by the SCC County Dog Fouling Enforcement team. The Clerk reported no complaints during April/May.
- c. **Direction Stone, Smokey Hole/Eastfield Lane:** Cllrs Cawley and Bennett have both inspected the Stone and do not believe it is at risk in its current position.
- d. **Recreation Ground Signage:** Clerk. C/F

**Reports & Correspondence:**

- a. **Recreation Ground/Next Steps:**
  - i. A bacon butty community breakfast event is planned for the 4th June 2023 to officially open the play equipment and to share the results of the Recreation Ground Development survey.

- ii. The survey results were very positive, with improved access being identified as the preferred next priority for residents, and a circular path being a very close second. Overall there was an emphasis on improving what we have and not starting all over again. There was a discussion as to whether the existing swings could be moved to the new play area. It was agreed this would be discussed as plans moving forward, as the Parish Council has been advised of potential safety issues of relocating old equipment.
- e. **Sovereign Update/Grant Funding Release:** The Clerk has been advised that the funding is in the pipeline by the previous SSDC lead Officer.
- f. **Local Community Networks:** Clerk & Cllr Griffiths confirmed they had had a helpful briefing from the South East Somerset LCN, one of the pilot LCNs. Steve Ashe advised that there was a launch meeting of the Crewkerne LCN on 15<sup>th</sup> June at Donyatt village hall. Going forward LCN meetings will not be held at the Town Hall and in order to encourage ownership and inclusivity, it is felt that meetings should take place in local community centres.
- g. **Clerk Report: Parish Council 1<sup>4th</sup> April – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023**
  - i. **Middle Chinnock Road Maintenance:** Maintenance cannot take place until the road has been swept and this cannot be done whilst there is still heavy rain forecast. Whilst there is complete sympathy for Road users, the gullies and potholes cannot be filled unless the Road is dry, otherwise the surfacing will not stay in place, as has recently happened on Scott's Way. As soon as the weather has improved, this is a priority for SCC.
  - ii. **Erosion of Banks in the Village:** The Clerk has had concerns relating to verges and banks at the side of the Roads in the villages and erosion issues. **Action: The Clerk is liaising with Highways on this matter.**
- h. **Unitary Updates: None**
- i. **Drains, Potholes and Hedges:** Potholes have been filled, but immediately cracked again due to the wet weather. The Road needs to dry out before any further filling. Drains have been cleaned and it was noted that the drains had held up really well to the recent heavy rain, where as many other villages had not been so fortunate.
- j. **SALC AGM update: None.**
- k. **Footpaths: update:** i. Eastall Farm, still waiting for planning request to be forwarded to the footpaths Officer. ii A request had been put forward last year by the Parish Council for improved access across the top field from West and Middle Chinnock. The Parish Council agreed that there only needs to be one gate going through from Higher Street. **Resolved.** The new gate should be on the field side.
- l. **Steve Ashe Update:** i. Energy Payments, Oil payments due to close soon and advised residents to make sure they have applied. SA to send details to the Clerk. ii. Vaccination schemes still available.

23/1073

**Correspondence & Matters for Wednesday 14th June 2023**

- a. **Agenda items, including Members Reports** to be forwarded to the Clerk before Monday 5th June 2023.

**Meeting closed 8.35pm**

**Next Parish Council Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**7.30pm, Village Hall, West Chinnock**

