

WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 11th October 2023

Cllr Bennett - Chair

Cllr Cockrem

Clerk: Kim Duller

3 Members of the General Public

Cllr Cawley

Cllr Partridge

Public Forum: No questions.

23/1107 **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Griffiths (WR)

23/1108 **Declarations of Interest:** i) Cllr Cawley, Allotments. ii) Cllr Bennett, Community Playground Committee.

23/1109 **To Approve and Sign as Correct the Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting, 13th September 2023. Resolved. All in Favour.**

23/1110 **Matters Arising Not on Agenda: None**

23/1111 **SCC/SSDC Councillors Report:** Previously circulated. Cllr Hewitson had sent apologies. The Chair asked Steve Ashton, in his capacity as resident and also a local councillor to update the PC with any local issues/news which could impact on W&MC. **i) Planning:** A decision had been made last week to take away the requirement for neighbours to be consulted on planning applications, to save money. The wording has been changed to "the planners may" have to do this rather than "must". The requirement for a planning notice has also been changed to "may". **ii) Octagon Theatre:** Project stopped, however under review. Yeovil Town Council is in negotiation with SC for a potential package of support. **iii) Stroke service Review:** A report has emerged which the "Senate" had produced and which gave reasons why the original proposals were not appropriate. This included staffing issues and concerns regarding the validity of the data which had previously been presented.

23/1112 **Planning:**

a. Applications:

- i) **Fortunes Well 22/00724/FUL, Higher Street, West Chinnock: No further update**
- ii) **23/02458/TCA: Trees in Conservation Area, High Cross, West Chinnock: No comments from the PC (Advisory notice– not statutory for the PC).**

b. Determinations: None

c. Planning Enforcement: C/F from September Meeting: i) Hollowell Hill: The Clerk has been advised by SC Cllr Patrick that this is not on the list of priority enforcement matters. **C/F from last meeting, no further update. ii) Smiths Hill:** SC Cllr Patrick has advised that enforcement is a high priority and that the planning team are in regular contact with the owner. **C/F from last meeting, no further update.**

d. Planning Queries: None

23/1113 **Finance:**

- a. To Approve Qtr. 2 Accounts which have been internally audited:** All Members had previously received a copy. All present were in favour. **Resolved.**
- b. To Approve the Clerks Expenses Qtr. 2. £131.41 Inspected by the Chair.** All present were in favour. **Resolved.**
- c. HMRC dispute:** FSO have advised to make formal complaint to the Accountancy Professional Conduct society. HMRC have been contacted and have requested the complaint be re-directed to the PAYE liability team. A discussion was held regarding whether the PC should continue to use Cox & Co for payroll. **Action: Clerk and Cllr Cockrem to consider alternatives.** It was noted that Clerks are unable to be self-employed due to 2011 legislative changes.
- d. HMRC PAYE £260.80:** All in favour. **Resolved.**

- e. To pay any routine invoices:
 - i. **SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils) £166.69** All in favour. **Resolved.**
 - ii. **SLL grass cutting September Invoice £285.38 including VAT:** All in favour. **Resolved.**
- f. **Delegated Powers & previously agreed invoices: None.**

23/1114

Allotments:

- a. **Allotment Reports:** 5 allotments are currently not up to standard. **Action: Clerk, in liaison with Cllr Partridge, to send letters to tenants whose plots do not meet the contractual standard, listing required actions within an agreed timescale.**
- b. **Rent Review:** To be carried forward to the November meeting.
- c. **Vacant Plots:** Currently only 20d.
- d. **Issues of Vandalism on Plots: Discussed under item 23/1115b**

23/1115

Matters arising from 13th September 2023 meeting:

- a. **Youth Shelter c/f 08.11.23:** Vandalism still continuing at plot 2. **Action: Chair to collect historic papers from Clerk.** Youth shelter still experiencing issues with rubbish. It was confirmed that there is no bin. Local W&MC youth have been seen using the youth shelter.
- b. **Pot Holes Recreation Ground: i) Pot holes.** Two more to be filled in. Cllr Cawley confirmed that he had enough scalplings to complete the works. **ii) Post & Rails:** Cllr Cawley confirmed some were missing. Cllr Cawley also mentioned the squaring out of the car park to accommodate another row of cars. The Chair stressed the need for any repairs or maintenance at the Rec to be reported back to the Parish Council. **Action: i) Agreed to purchase steel chains for between the posts as a temporary measure until further formal works take place at the Rec and to use existing posts. ii) Cllr Bennett, Clerk, and Cllr Cawley to have a site meeting at the Rec to gain an insight into the request Cllr Cawley had made to square off the existing car park. The Chair confirmed that any proposals for change must be brought back to the PC for approval. iii) Overnight camping at the Rec:** The issue of overnight camping at the Rec was raised again. Cllr Partridge confirmed that, identifying himself as a Parish Councillor, he had asked a camper van owner to leave the Rec. This was during the summer holiday period. It was also noted that there had been some overnight parking from a local business. After a discussion, including again locking of the Rec gate overnight, the following action was agreed. **Action: Clerk to organise wording on new signs at the Rec to include no overnight parking or camping.**
- c. **Recreation Ground Signage:** The sign has been laid out in draft. It was agreed to commission the larger of the two signs at a cost of £90.00 plus VAT. There was a discussion querying why the signs were not even larger. The Chair explained that when the next stage of the Rec development takes place, there will be new signage, including a notice board. He confirmed that as the current temporary signs kept being taken down, the PC needed a short-term robust solution to cover its legal responsibility. The signs will need posts or consider putting on an appropriate place. All in favour. **Resolved.** **Action: Clerk to circulate final copy to Chair to sign off.**
- d. **Core Policies and Standing Orders Review: c/f November Meeting.**
- e. **Asset Register c/f November meeting.**
- f. **20mph Speed Signage, Lower Street:** The Chair reiterated that the decision of the Parish Council made at the September meeting to locate the sign outside of Pondanella was still the preferred location due to the line of sight. It was confirmed that legally Highways own the land where the sign was to be located, on the footpath. SC had confirmed to the Chair and Clerk that it would be the final decision of the Parish Council. The Parish Council discussed the matter again and concluded that as the Muddled Man owners had agreed for the sign to be located on the pavement as shown in the

previously circulated plan, that the Parish Council would take a pragmatic approach to allow the move from the preferred location to prevent any further delays in the installation and to keep children and families safe. Proposed Cllr Cockrem seconded Cllr Cawley. All in favour. **Resolved. Action: Clerk to advise Gary Warren (SC) project lead and Cllrs Patrick and Hewitson.**

- g. **The Knapp:** Correspondence on-going.
- h. **Finger Posts:** Cllr Hewitson had confirmed that Chiselborough organised the Finger Post painting themselves at between £40.00 and £70.00. They were able to expedite these themselves as the lead volunteer had the correct health & safety training and qualifications to undertake the work. **Action: Clerk to liaise with Clerk at Chiselborough.**
- i. **Parish Grants:** The Clerk confirmed these had been advertised with the closing date of 30th November, and a decision/s being made at the December Parish Council meeting. The Chair explained that the Playground Committee responsible for the play equipment at the school had informally approached the PC to discuss a grant for funding for maintenance and renewal costs. They were advised to approach the school and the school PA for in order to put together a joint project, and that the PC would also consider a grant in the normal grant funding round depending on how many other village organisations make an application. (The Chair had previously declared an interest in this committee).
- j. **Parish Councillor Vacancies:** A discussion was held and a number of suggestions proposed. Emphasis was placed on face to face contact with local residents at social events and village meeting places. Also discussed was identifying new residents who have been in the village for over a year. The Chair agreed an action plan was required. **Action: Chair & Clerk to produce a plan of action, however to continue to advertise and also to discuss with SC, SALC and NALC any best practice.**

23/1116

Reports & Correspondence:

- a. **Greatfields Tree maintenance:** All Councillors had seen the plans and were happy with the proposals: **Action Clerk to notify owners.**
- b. **Village Hall Closure 4 weeks, January 2024: Noted.**
- c. **Local Community Networks:** It was noted the Clerk had circulated the PowerPoint presentation regarding the latest finances at County. Steve Ashe confirmed that a meeting had taken place on 16th September 2023. Latest estimate shortfall for SC £30 million pounds.
- d. **Clerk Report: Parish Council 13th September 2023 – 11th October 2023**
 - i) **Location of the new Grit Bin on Lower Street:** This was paid for by Cllr Mike Hewitson. Needs a joint decision by the Parish Council. **Action: The Chair and Cllr Cawley to have a site meeting and make recommendations back to the Parish Council on location.**
 - ii) **Pot Holes:** Lower Street, 2 potholes reported. One filled (particularly dangerous as on the slope where cyclists come down very fast), second considered not to be deep enough.
 - iii) **Report from resident with nails in tyres, and damage to car caused by rock fall using Smokey Hole Lane:** Clerk contacted Highways and the resident has been directed toward SC's insurance claim site.
- e. **Footpaths Update:** i) Cllr Cockrem updated her position as Parish Councillor responsible for Footpaths. She has received training, 2 references have been taken; an interview has taken place with SC and endorsement given by the Parish Council. There is further H & Safety training to be undertaken. Cllr Cockrem has however received a high viz jacket, fold up saw and a pair of secateurs. Sticky arrows will also be provided and Cllr Cockrem will have to fill in a time sheet for SC. It was noted that previously, Councillors who have been co-opted to be the Footpath Officer had not had to undergo this training and it was felt that this process had been quite onerous for a Volunteer Footpath Officer.

iii) **Footpath Report:** Following a reported gate being locked on a footpath, Cllr Cockrem has investigated this and it was open. Cllr Cockrem has tried to contact the resident and left a message on the answer phone, however has not yet been able to talk to the resident.

f. **Drains, Potholes and Hedges:** Some more potholes have been marked up at various locations around the village.

g. **Unitary Update:** None apart from the finances previously reported under item 23/1116c.

23/1117

Correspondence & Matters for Wednesday 8th November 2023

a. **Budget Meeting** to take place before the December 14th Parish Council Meeting at 6.00p.m.

b. **Agenda items, including Members Reports** to be forwarded to the Clerk before Thursday 2nd November 2023. (Councillor Partridge gave apologies for 2.11.2023).

c. **Chair to confirm attendance at 8th November 2023 meeting**

Meeting closed 8.30pm

Next Parish Council Meeting 8th November 2023

7.30pm, Village Hall, West Chinnock