

WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 13th September 2023

Cllr Bennett - Chair

Cllr Cockrem

5 Members of the General Public

Cllr Cawley

Clerk: Kim Duller

Public Forum: i) NV raised the issue of Youth Shelter plot and concerns regarding the continued rubbish around the plots. Discussion followed under item 23/1103. Finger signs in Chiselborough have been painted. There was uncertainty whether this was volunteers or part of the precept. Norton Sub Hamdon also has volunteers who paint theirs. Currently Gill and Keith Dodge paint and maintain the Finger Posts on Lower Street triangle. **Action: Cllr Mike Hewitson agreed to talk to Chiselborough PC to find out who had undertaken the work and feedback.**

23/1096 **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Griffiths (H), Cllr Partridge (WR).

23/1097 **Declarations of Interest:** i) Cllr Cawley, Allotments. ii) Cllr Bennett, Community Playground Committee.

23/1098 **To Approve and Sign as Correct the Minutes of the Parish Council 12th July 2023.**

Resolved. All in Favour.

23/1099 **Matters Arising, Not on Agenda:** The Chair thanked Keith Dodge on behalf of the Parish Council, for completely refurbishing the Direction Stone at Bow bridge after it had been badly damaged. The new Stone stands out proud, just next to the Bridge and is an important part of our village history. He went on to say how grateful and appreciative the Parish Council and residents are for all of the volunteering and support both Gill and Keith give to the villages.

23/1100 **SCC/SSDC Councillors Report:** i) **Monthly Newsletter:** The Clerk and Chair raised concerns regarding the new format and length as a Lib Dem newsletter and not specific enough to the Ward. Likelihood it wouldn't be read in this format. After discussion, it was agreed, just a couple of paragraphs specific to the village would be really helpful, with a verbal overview of the bigger picture issues which may impact on the Villages. ii) **Grit bins:** Clerk and Cllr Hewitson working together to ensure the list of bins SC has been registered and is the same as the Parish Council list. Currently 2 extra bins will need filling. Cllr Hewitson said he would aim to ensure the PC's list matched up with the County list. The Chair thanked SC for offering to pay for the salt this year. The Clerk explained she could not access the new SC encrypted IT system. **Action: Cllr Hewitson offered to help find support for the Clerk from SC.** iii) Cllr Hewitson explained there was an interactive map available on the SC website showing where all of the verge cutting is taking place. **Action: Cllr Hewitson to forward the Clerk the link.** iv) Cllr Hewitson reported that Somerset has the highest level of waste recycling in the UK, but that SC is still looking to improve. v) **SC finances:** Overspend of 27 million this financial year. A vast amount of this is due to the rise in social care, residential care, domiciliary care costs and statutory children's services. Both of these budgets are putting pressure on the overall budget and SC are identifying areas of savings. Approx 2 dozen Councils across the country are on section 114 notices. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_114_notice SC will have to draw on reserve this year. The Chair thanked Cllr Hewitson for attending the meeting and for supporting the Parish Council.

23/1101 **Planning:**

a. Applications:

- i) **Fortunes Well 22/00724/FUL, Higher Street, West Chinnock.** The Clerk advised that there had been more correspondence on the planning application portal.

This included recommendations on flooding and draining, (not compulsory as it is classed as a minor development), a Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy report had been carried out, <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/environment/nutrient-neutrality-and-planning-system> with associated correspondence relating to ecology, suggested alternative land use, and further information submitted by a resident. There is still no further information as to when a decision is due, although the Lead Member for planning has indicated that he has no objections to the current proposal. Neil Tinkley was asked to share his thoughts on the information the Clerk had received and kindly agreed to report back. Further information had been received by the Clerk on the adoption of the Road from the planning Officer, which indicated further plans would be required before any decisions could be made.

- b. **Determinations: 23/01276/HOU Rickhay, Scott's Way, West Chinnock TA18 7PU:** Planning permission had been granted, subject to a number of conditions which the Parish Council had requested in their feedback to the SC planning team.
- c. **Planning enforcement: The Clerk had been advised that the SC Enforcement team is still very, very behind.** 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:** The Clerk had received a request from a resident regarding pre-application advice. Traditionally this had been provided by a pre-application advice officer over the phone. After some research, including talking to other Clerks and SC Cllr Oliver Patrick, the only way now of requesting pre-application advice is through the pre-application advice portal. A single application has to be made for each application and this advice is chargeable. <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/pre-application-advice/>

23/1102

Finance:

- a. **To Approve Qtr1 accounts, subject to internal audit 2023/24:** The audit had taken place and the figures were correct. Whilst Cllrs Griffiths and Partridge were not at the meeting, they had sent confirmation via email that they had inspected the accounts and the notes from the Auditor and were in favour of approving the accounts. All present were in favour. **Resolved.** The Clerk confirmed that a full VAT receipt had been received from Sovereign, Greatfields Rent received, £5.00 and allotment rents balance sheet prepared by the Clerk will form part of the accounts when audited.
- b. **The Clerks salary has now been changed to monthly payment and will be a standing order, direct debit, with any amends for OT or holiday pay, made each qtr.**
- c. **HMRC dispute:** On the advice of the internal auditor, this has been referred to the FSO.
- d. **Precept Advice for Somerset Council:** No information will be published before December 2023 and PC's are advised to base their planning on past years.
- e. **To pay any routine invoices:**
 - i. **SLL grass cutting July Invoice £285.38 including VAT: Resolved**
 - ii. **Cllr Cawley Taps at Allotments £33.52. Previously approved, Clerk waiting for Bacs details.**
- f. **Delegated Powers & previously agreed invoices:**
 - i. **Pete Cockrem Plant Hire, scalplings for the Recreation ground carpark: £70.00 + VAT. Previously approved. Resolved.** Cllr Bennett thanked Mr Cockrem for delivery. It was agreed that no further scalplings were required at the moment. **Action: Cllr Cawley to finish filling in the holes.**

ii. **Cox & Co Payroll Service £25 + VAT. Previously approved, standing order.**

iii. **SLL August grass cutting £83.47 including VAT: Resolved.**

23/1103

Allotments: Clerk

- a. **Issues of vandalism on Plots:** Plot 20, vegetables have been dug up, but no-one had taken them. Also, at plot 2. Considered as vandalism. The Chair requested plot holders keep "eyes and ears open". Plot 2, the tenant will be putting additional fencing around the plot. It was noted that food left out for people to take, was also subject to vandalism. **Action: The Chair confirmed he would be looking further in to these matters and asked residents also remain the eyes and ears of the villages.**

23/1104

Matters arising from the 14th July 2023 meeting:

- a. **Youth Shelter: C/F to October 2023 meeting.**
- b. **Pot Holes Recreation Ground:** Thank you to Cllr Cawley. Further holes to be filled.
- c. **Recreation Ground Signage: C/F.** The sign has been laid out, but there are delays in it been made. **Action: Clerk to chase the company.**
- d. **Core Policies Review: Action: Clerk and Cllr Griffiths to further review each policy/standing order. C/F to October meeting.**
- e. **20mph Speed Signage – School Approaches:** The previously agreed location on Lower Street has been disputed by a resident and the contractors were asked to leave when they arrived to erect the sign. Cllr Patrick (Somerset Council) has asked for a meeting to consider a new location. The Parish Council Chair asked SA if Highways owned the path and whether residents have the right to say whether or not can be put on land owned by the Council. It was confirmed that residents could not. Cllr Patrick had also been asked to respond on the issue of ownership. **Action: The Parish Council Resolved that the post should be located in the original position. The Clerk was asked to find out the cost of the contractors being turned away. SA to speak to Rebecca Vaughn who is knowledgeable about signage.**
- f. **Asset Register: Action: The Clerk to provide Cllr Griffith with a copy of existing register and as well NALC recommended framework. C/F to October meeting.**
- g. **The Knapp:** Correspondence on-going.

23/1105

Reports & Correspondence:

- a. **Proposal from SC for a Community Funded 20mph Speed Limit in Somerset Villages:** The Clerk confirmed that following discussion with other Clerks and Parish Councils that this would not be considered as high priority at the moment, however it would be reviewed after the new 20mph signs had been put up around the school. It was noted that the quote of approximately £15k seemed very high, especially as this was the starting price. Hinton St George now have a SIDs.
- b. **Recreation Ground Development Update C/F to October 2023**
- c. **Local Community Networks: SA updated – mainly Highways on the agenda.**
- d. **Clerk Report: Parish Council 12th July – 13th September 2023**
- i) The Clerk confirmed that the **diversion at the top of Poop Hill/Smiths Hill and blocking Smokey Hole Lane** had been a mistake. Highways have apologised for any inconvenience caused.
 - ii) **Blue Arrows at the top of Poop Hill** have been put there by the water Board to protect pipes from digging during the remedial works which will be happening in October 2023. (Pipe broken in the Road – works to start 9th October 2023).
 - iii) **Constant water run at the bottom of Poop Hill:** Originally thought to be springs, now believed to be a blocked drain. Drain will be jetted in the near future.
 - iv) **Mobile Library Service once a month:** Currently only one resident using the service and it is in danger of closing. **Action: Clerk to**

publicise “Use it or Lose it” message via social media and posters/leaflets. Clerk also contacted Jamie Caswell at the school to see if they can utilise the service.

- v) **Grit Bins:** Covered previously under County Report. The Clerk thanked County Councillor Cllr Hewitson for his support on all things “grit bins.
- vi) **Fly Tip Middle Chinnock, reported by the Clerk. Action: Clerk to report another very similar fly tip on Hollowell Hill by the footpath heading north.**
- e. **Footpaths Update:** i) Path from Layne Terrace across the fields, over to the stables has been checked and is not blocked. The Footpath Officer confirmed the she had requested the maize to be cut. This was actioned on 21st August by the Farmer. The fallen tree on this path was mentioned, but not considered to be problematic. This path is not accessible at any point for buggies, wheelchairs etc and therefore the tree was not considered to be a nuisance and has been located in its current position for a long time.
ii) **The Chair reported the gate going in to the Rec was broken. Action: Cllr Cawley to visit and report back to Cllr Cockrem.**
- f. **Drains, Potholes and Hedges: Reported under Clerks report.**
- g. **West & Middle Chinnock Grants:** It was Resolved that the grant budget of £1,500 would be advertised only once a year in 2023/24 and any underspend would be put towards the Recreation Ground Development. **Action: Clerk to publicise the grants in October, with closing date 30th November 2023. Decision/s to be announced at the December 2023 Parish Council meeting.**
- h. **Dates of 2023/24 meetings:** Published on the Community website.
- i. **Unitary Updates: None.**
- j. **Phone Box:** There has been a number of reports of unwanted goods being put in the phone box rather than just books. On two occasions the phone box was so full that the door wouldn’t close and books became wet. **Action: Clerk to put up signage requesting books only.** There was mention of this on the village FB page, however this post has been taken down.

23/1106

Correspondence & Matters for Wednesday 11th October 2023

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

Meeting closed 8.15pm

Next Parish Council Meeting 11th October 2023

7.30pm, Village Hall, West Chinnock

