



Minutes of extraordinary meeting of Cotford St Luke Parish Council held on Thursday 9th January 2025, at The Community Centre, Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, TA4 1HZ, starting at 7pm.

Present: Cllr Draper-Gammon, Cllr Best, Cllr Freeman, Cllr Mcree and Cllr Harrison (Co-opted at this meeting)

In attendance two members of the public and Helen McGladdery – Clerk and RFO.

Before the meeting commenced one resident raised their concerns over planning application 53/24/0006 and the other resident was present to receive the update on the tennis courts.

80/24 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Cllr Birch – family commitments

Somerset Cllr Sully - Holiday

81/25 To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 12th September 2024

The draft minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Action: The Clerk to add to the website

82/25 Co-option of Councillors to fill vacancies

Bridget Harrison had previously expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council.

The Clerk and Chair met with Bridget and ran through the role and expectations of a Councillor prior to the meeting.

Members resolved unanimously to co-opt Bridget and the relevant paperwork was signed by Bridget and the Clerk.

Action: 1. Cllr Harrison to return the Declaration of Interests form to the Clerk within 28 days
2. The Clerk to forward the relevant paperwork to Somerset Council

83/25 To receive the draft budget 2025-26.

The draft budget was circulated to Councillors, it was agreed in principle.

Action: 1. Councillors to forward any comments on the budget by Friday 17th January
2. The Clerk to add an agenda item to finalise the budget to January meeting agenda

84/25 To approve quote for tennis court cleaning

£5000 had previously been earmarked for works to the tennis court. Three quotes were discussed, and Councillors approved the quote from Courtcare. It was agreed

to instruct them to carry out the cleaning as soon as possible to prevent further damage and the resurfacing and new lines will be carried out in the spring.

Action: The Clerk to contact Courtcare to proceed with the works.

85/25 To agree the response to planning application 53/24/0006 - Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 80 No. dwellings with associated access, road/footway/cycleway provisions, open space, allotments, landscaping, surface water attenuation and ancillary works on land west of Dene Road, Cotford St Luke

A draft response (attached) was distributed to Councillors, this was approved with the addition of concerns over the location of the allotments and the PC to register an interest in taking on the allotments once completed and a request for this to be added to the S106 agreement

Action: The Clerk to submit the response to Somerset Council planning department

Attachment:

1. Planning response 53/24/0006

Subject: 53/24/0006 - Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 80 No. dwellings with associated access, road/footway/cycleway provisions, open space, allotments, landscaping, surface water attenuation and ancillary works on land west of Dene Road, Cotford St Luke
Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below details of the response from Cotford St Luke Parish Council to planning application 53/24/0006, which seeks approval of reserved matters. This application pertains to the access, landscaping, appearance, and scale for the erection of 80 dwellings, along with associated infrastructure, on land off Dene Road, Cotford St Luke.

Access and Traffic Impact:

The proposed development's access via Dene Road raises concerns regarding increased traffic volume and its potential impact on local road safety. It is imperative that a comprehensive traffic assessment be conducted to evaluate the capacity of existing roadways and to identify necessary improvements to accommodate the additional vehicles. The review needs to take into account the two access routes into the village, Dene Road from Bishops Lydeard has a weakened narrow railway bridge which will need to be accessed if it is capable of holding the strain of the construction materials. The other end of Dene Road, heading towards Norton Fitzwarren has many limitations and parked cars on dangerous corners, and if heading the opposite direction towards Oake, the roads are not suitable for HGV.

Flooding:

The flood defence system (ditches and culverts) is not adopted and therefore the various sections need to be maintained by 3 separate land owners - the maintenance is only carried out when these landowners are chased by residents and the parish council, it is not proactively done

The flood plain is not adopted and has not been maintained in any meaningful way for a number of years - it is unclear who should do it and what should be done

A resident who's house backs onto the floodplain has fenced off a significant portion of the land, including one of the attenuation ponds, for private use - will the planning department contact this resident?

A recent walk around the floodplain and culverts and ditched with the Somerset council flood and coastal service manager highlighted that one of the attenuation ponds included on the original plans for Cotford was not actually created, so the system was not built properly in the first place

The original planning application was rejected and it was clearly stated that a proper and sufficient surface water run off plan needed to be submitted, but when the appeal was put in, the application was approved without this

The large attenuation pond in the main park is not being maintained and doesn't fill up - we suspect the pipe needs jetting, but it is unclear who is responsible for this

Landscaping and Environmental Considerations:

While the inclusion of public open spaces, allotments, and play areas is commendable, detailed landscaping plans should prioritize the preservation of existing natural features and biodiversity. The implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is essential to manage surface water runoff and mitigate flood risks. Permeable driveways would be preferable to avoid standing water near houses. It will be expected that there will be a management company utilised to maintain any culverts, attenuation ponds or any other landscaping that will be installed.

Design and Appearance:

The proposed dwellings should reflect the architectural character of Cotford St Luke, ensuring that building materials and styles are in harmony with the village's aesthetic. Consideration should be given to the integration of energy-efficient designs and renewable energy sources to promote sustainability.

Community Amenities and Infrastructure:

The development's impact on local services, including schools, healthcare facilities, and public transport, must be thoroughly assessed. Contributions towards the enhancement of these services should be secured through appropriate planning obligations to ensure they can support the increased population.

Allotments:

The Parish Council requests that the location of the allotments is considered to permit vehicular access for plot holders. The Parish Council wishes to register an interest in taking on the allotments once completed and wish for this to be added to the S106 agreement.

Conclusion:

The Parish Council acknowledges the need for housing development to meet local demand. However, it is crucial that this development is executed thoughtfully, with due consideration to infrastructure, flood prevention, environmental sustainability, and the well-being of current and future residents. Cotford requires a mixture of property types to be created, with an expectation that Bungalows and single storey buildings would be gratefully received by those with accessibility needs. We recommend that the Planning Department carefully reviews the concerns outlined above and ensures that all necessary assessments and mitigations are in place before granting approval.

Thank you for considering our comments. We look forward to your response and are willing to engage in further discussions to ensure the best outcomes for our community.