



Minutes of meeting of Cotford St Luke Parish Council held on Thursday 23rd January 2025, at The Community Centre, Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, TA4 1HZ

Present: Cllr Draper-Gammon, Cllr Freeman, Cllr Birch, Cllr Mcree and Cllr Harrison

In attendance six members of the public PCSO Henderson, PCSO Brianna Whelan and Helen McGladdery – Parish Clerk and RFO

“Have Your Say”

1. One resident attended and wished to pass on thanks to all Councillors for the work they are doing for the Parish.
2. One resident was very concerned about the continued anti-social behaviour in the Parish from a group of Youths.
3. One resident raised concern that when reporting a crime online it was difficult to choose an option and had concerns that the lack of lighting by the Youth shelter was putting residents and the PCSOs at risk – PCSO Henderson advised to just choose whichever category you feel is appropriate, but it did not matter if it was incorrect as it will be amended at the admin stage. She also confirmed that she has concerns over the lack of lighting by the Youth Shelter and asked if some could be added to protect residents.

PCSO Henderson gave details of actions being taken (listed below in PSCO report)

Meeting starts: 7.30

86/25 To approve any apologies for absence:
Cllr Mike Best – attending another meeting.
Somerset Cllr Sully
Somerset Cllr Rigby

87/25 To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations.
None

88/25 To approve the draft minutes of:
a) The Parish Council meeting held on 21st November 2024.
b) The Extraordinary meeting held on 9th January 2025
The draft minutes of both meetings were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Action: To be added to the website

89/25 To receive reports from:
a. Somerset Councillors.
None

b. Representative(s) to the Taunton Local Community Network.
None

c. Cotford St Luke Neighbourhood Policing Team.

PCSO Henderson gave an update that there are now extra police patrols in the village following concerns over anti-social behaviour. She advised that the firearms unit and police attended immediately when concerns were raised that the youths were carrying knives. Properties were searched and no weapons found. She raised concerns that incidents are not being reported to the police and made a plea to encourage residents to report all incidents and advised of the names of the individuals are known to add that in the crime report.

If individuals fear for personal safety call 999 or to report a non-urgent crime call 101 or follow the link: <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/> choose the most appropriate category for the crime, if unsure pick any, as it will be amended by the police at the admin stage if incorrect. You can also report anonymously

Action: To add information on how to report a crime to be added to the website and noticeboards

Action: Clerk to contact Somerset Council regarding additional lighting along the path by the shelter and along the top of the path

Action: To look into signage for around the village and additional information for the PC website regarding how to report crime in order to raise awareness

90/25

Clerks report

- a. **Update on actions since previous meeting**
- b. **Details of correspondence received since the last meeting.**

The Clerk's report was distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

91/25

Finance

- a. **To approve the accounts for payment since the previous meeting.**

The Clerk advised that now she has access to the HMRC account she has reclaimed the outstanding VAT for the last financial year and up to 31/12/24.

Receipts:

HMRC – Vat refund 23/24 and part 24/25	£5,762.01
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Payments:

Lloyds Credit card – November	£9.00
SALC – Training	£50.00
HMRC – NI and Tax – December	£236.86
Unity Bank Service charge November	£6.00
Somerset Council – repairs to fences	£471.28
Carly Press – No fly tipping Signs	£186.00
SC pension fund – December	£290.22
Lloyds Credit card – December	£3.00
Unity Bank Service charge December	£6.00
H McGladdery, expenses, Clerks allowance and mileage	£133.63

The Clerks December salary was paid in this period.

Approved for payment:

Cllr Draper Gammon – expenses, filing cabinet	£380.37
Glendale – tree work behind Burge Crescent	£1020.00
Somerset Council – Play inspections/new bins & emptying	£3275.14
Complete Weed Control	£811.20
Mobile phone January	£8.50
HMRC – NI and Tax January	£236.66
Somerset Council Pensions	£290.22
H McGladdery – expenses January	£22.99

The Clerks salary for January

- b. **To receive budget to spend report**

The report was distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

c. To receive the three-year forecast

The report was distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting and attached to the minutes.

d. To agree the budget for 2025/26

The report was distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting and attached to the minutes.

Resolved: Councillors approved the draft budget and agreed to a deficit for the next year to come from the reserves, as the reserves are above the threshold required.

Action: To be added to the website

e. To agree the precept request from Somerset Council

Resolved: A precept request of £65,000 was approved and the relevant paperwork was signed by the Chair

Action: The Clerk to forward the request to Somerset Council

f. To receive update on External Audit

No further updates received.

g. To approve the purchase of a new noticeboard from CIL funds

The Clerk advised that permission had been sought from Somerset Council as the proposed location by the school/tennis court is their land. The Clerk is also checking if a license is required. The noticeboard will be a community noticeboard to allow local groups/businesses to advertise matters of interest for residents.

Resolved: Three quotes were discussed, and it was agreed if a licence not required to proceed to purchase a noticeboard with a budget of £1,500 agreed for purchase and instalment.

Action: The Clerk to arrange the purchase and installation

h. To approve the purchase of an information sign at the Tennis Courts and MUGA

A requirement is that there should be a notice at the tennis court/MUGA to advise where to report any problems. AS three quotes were recently discussed to purchase signs it was agreed to go with the same supplier.

Resolved: a budget of £100 was agreed to purchase and install a sign

Action: The Clerk to arrange the purchase of the sign

92/25

Governance

To approve:

a) Grants policy

b) CIL policy

c) Tree policy

d) Standing orders

The policies were distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

Resolved: Councillors agreed to adopt the policies above

Action: To be added to the website

e) To confirm 2025 meeting dates

Meetings will continue to be on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7pm in the Community Hall.

The following dates were agreed:

19th June, 17th July, no meeting in August, 18th September, 16th October, 20th November and no meeting in December.

Action: 1. The Clerk to book the hall

2. To be added to the website

f) To confirm Councillors areas of responsibility

Open spaces/play areas/Rights of Way – Cllr Freeman, Cllr McCrea and Cllr Draper-Gammon
Tree monitor - Cllr Harrison

Finance and Planning – Cllr Birch
Admin/Social media, Communication/Correspondence – The Clerk
Website - Cllr Birch, Cllr Draper-Gammon
Police liaison – Cllr McCrea
Community Association liaison - Cllr Harrison, Cllr Draper-Gammon
Noticeboards – Cllr McCrea and Cllr Harrison

93/25

Planning Applications:

To agree response to planning applications received:

53/24/0007 - Application for approval of reserved matters following outline application

53/21/0010 for the access, landscaping, appearance and scale for the erection of 80 No. dwellings, vehicle access, drainage, public open space including allotments and play areas, foot paths, cycle ways, landscaping and associated works on land off Dene Road Cotford St Luke

Response attached.

Action: The Clerk to forward to Somerset Council planning

94/25

Cotford St Luke flood defence system: ditches, culverts, attenuation ponds and floodplain:

a. Update on Somerset Rivers Authority grant application.

The application is in process and the finalised draft will be presented at the February meeting for approval by Councillors.

Action:

1. The Clerk and Cllr Draper-Gammon to complete the draft application.
2. To be added to the February agenda

b. To discuss proceeding with a Flood defences survey

It was agreed to obtain 2 more independent quotes to carry out a survey of the flood defences within the Parish.

Action:

1. The Clerk to obtain 2 more quotes.
2. To be added to the February agenda

95/25

Amenities and assets:

a. Tennis courts: to receive update on planned works and to approve repairs.

Phase 1 of the work has commenced to clean the surface.

Phase 2 will commence in March to paint the surface, reapply markings and add the additional pickleball markings, a new net and posts will be purchased, and the new booking system will be in place.

b. To discuss tree survey quotes received

Deferred pending further information.

Action: To be added to the February agenda

96/25

To agree Parish Council goals for 2025.

The following goals were agreed by Councillors

- restore the tennis court to full use, complete with booking system and provision for pickleball as well as tennis
- gain clarity on ownership of/responsibility for all assets and land within the village and ensure regular maintenance is carried out where needed
- put in place a multi-year tree maintenance plan
- continue working with landowners to ensure flood defences are properly and regularly maintained and obtain a survey of entire flood defence system

- apply to Community Action fund for money to support flood plain and other crown land maintenance
- replace all older waste bins with new, larger, general and recycling bins
- create a wildlife-focused plan for the village - identify areas for wildflowers, hedgerow creation etc.

97/25

Suggested items from Councillors for inclusion in the next meeting.

- Purchase of artwork, cups and glasses for the hall
- Emergency plan
- To approve quote for weed treatment of the MUGA
- To approve quote for Tree survey
- To approve quote for Flood defences survey
- SRA application
- Cotford 25 – to discuss applications received and to discuss repairing the bench around the tree to mark Cotford 25
- To discuss the PC Facebook page and plan of action moving forward
- To discuss installing CCTV and lighting on paths covering MUGA/Tennis Court/Youth shelter

98/25

Next meeting: Thursday 20th February 2025, 19.00, Community Centre.

Meeting closed 8.15pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Attached:

1. Three-year forecast
2. Budget 25-26
3. Planning application response 53/24/0007

RECEIPTS		Estimate 24-25	Forecast 25-26	Forecast 26-27	Forecast 27-28
Precept from SC		£ 62,000.00	£ 65,000.00	£ 70,000.00	£ 81,000.00
Bank interest		£ 400.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00
Total receipts		£ 62,400.00	£ 66,000.00	£ 71,000.00	£ 82,000.00
PAYMENTS					
Clerk's salary inc NI contributions		£ 9,408.03	£ 18,375.00	£ 20,500.00	£ 23,000.00
Pension contributions		£ 1,800.00	£ 4,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 6,000.00
Clerk's Home working allowance		£ 156.00	£ 350.00	£ 375.00	£ 400.00
Clerks travel expenses		£ 60.00	£ 120.00	£ 130.00	£ 150.00
Payroll services		£ 312.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Office and Stationery supplies		£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 150.00	£ 175.00
Insurance		£ 920.16	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,600.00	£ 1,750.00
Meeting room hire		£ 210.00	£ 250.00	£ 260.00	£ 280.00
Audit fees		£ 1,000.00	£ 600.00	£ 650.00	£ 700.00
Membership		£ 799.51	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,100.00	£ 1,300.00
Election fees		£ -	£ -	£ 250.00	£ -
Telephone		£ 50.00	£ 102.00	£ 120.00	£ 135.00
Bank Charges		£ 124.80	£ 72.00	£ 100.00	£ 120.00
Misc admin		£ 40.00	£ 72.00	£ 80.00	£ 100.00
Training Clerk		£ -	£ 50.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Training Councillors		£ 500.00	£ 250.00	£ 300.00	£ 400.00
Grass Cutting		£ 14,835.09	£ 22,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 27,500.00
Culverts/Drains/Ditches		£ 1,022.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,250.00	£ 1,500.00
Tree maintenance		£ 2,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,500.00
Weed Killing		£ 2,283.20	£ 2,433.60	£ 2,200.00	£ 2,500.00
Safety Inspections		£ 478.64	£ 2,500.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,250.00
Tennis Courts & MUGA		£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,750.00
Misc Estates		£ 1,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,750.00
Litter/Dog Bins		£ 406.64	£ 850.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Contingency		£ -	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00
Play equipment/outdoor gym		£ 1,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 3,000.00
S137		£ 25.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
NON S137		£ 1,400.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 4,000.00
Village celebrations			£ 2,000.00		
Christmas celebrations			£ 2,500.00		
Website Hosting		£ 225.00	£ 250.00	£ 300.00	£ 350.00
Website Fees		£ 49.99	£ 50.00	£ 100.00	£ 125.00
Subscriptions		£ 1,379.40	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,750.00	£ 1,900.00
IT equipment		£ -	£ 750.00	£ -	£ -
Total payments		£ 43,585.46	£ 79,274.60	£ 81,915.00	£ 92,835.00
Surplus/Deficit for the year		£ 18,814.54	-£ 13,274.60	-£ 10,915.00	-£ 10,835.00
Opening balance of PC Funds		£ 93,753.00	£ 112,567.54	£ 99,292.94	£ 88,377.94
Estimated closing balance of PC Funds		£ 112,567.54	£ 99,292.94	£ 88,377.94	£ 77,542.94
Less CIL Funds		£ 55,978.11	£ 55,978.11	£ 55,978.11	£ 55,978.11
Reserves		£ 56,589.43	£ 43,314.83	£ 32,399.83	£ 21,564.83
Reserves should be 50% of precept		£ 31,000.00	£ 32,500.00	£ 35,000.00	£ 40,500.00
Difference		£ 25,589.43	£ 10,814.83	-£ 2,600.17	-£ 18,935.17

BUDGET 2025-26			
ESTIMATED RECEIPTS	24/25 Budget	24/25 Projected	Budget 25/26
Precept	£ 62,000.00	£ 62,000.00	£ 65,000.00
Bank interest	£ 1,000.00	£ 400.00	£ 1,000.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 63,000.00	£ 62,400.00	£ 66,000.00
ESTIMATED PAYMENTS	24/25 Budget	24/25 Projected	Budget 25/26
Clerk's salary inc NI contributions	£ 16,104.96	£ 9,408.03	£ 18,375.00
Pension contributions	£ -	£ 1,800.00	£ 4,500.00
Clerk's Home working allowance	£ 104.40	£ 156.00	£ 350.00
Clerks travel expenses	£ 150.00	£ 60.00	£ 120.00
Payroll services	£ 328.00	£ 312.00	£ -
Office and Stationery supplies	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Insurance	£ 1,483.00	£ 920.16	£ 1,500.00
Meeting room hire	£ 210.00	£ 210.00	£ 250.00
Audit fees	£ 559.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 600.00
Membership	£ 812.00	£ 799.51	£ 1,000.00
Election fees	£ 250.00	£ -	£ -
Telephone	£ 80.00	£ 50.00	£ 102.00
Bank Charges	£ 150.00	£ 124.80	£ 72.00
Misc admin	£ 100.00	£ 40.00	£ 72.00
Training Clerk	£ 60.00	£ -	£ 50.00
Training Councillors	£ 150.00	£ 500.00	£ 250.00
Sub Total	£ 20,641.36	£ 15,480.50	£ 27,341.00
ent			
Grass Cutting	£ 14,645.00	£ 14,835.09	£ 22,000.00
Culverts/Drains/Ditches	£ -	£ 1,022.00	£ 1,000.00
Tree maintenance	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 5,000.00
Weed Killing	£ 3,292.00	£ 2,283.20	£ 2,433.60
Safety Inspections	£ 4,500.00	£ 478.64	£ 2,500.00
Tennis Courts & MUGA	£ 250.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Misc Estates	£ 3,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Litter/Dog Bins	£ 2,935.00	£ 406.64	£ 850.00
Contingency	£ 3,500.00	£ -	£ 3,000.00
Play equipment/outdoor gym - If repairs/replacements are required	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Sub Total	£ 36,122.00	£ 25,025.57	£ 42,783.60
S137	£ 100.00	£ 25.00	£ 100.00
NON S137	£ 1,400.00	£ 1,400.00	£ 2,000.00
Village events			£ 2,000.00
Christmas events			£ 2,500.00
Sub Total	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,425.00	£ 6,600.00
Website Hosting	£ 185.00	£ 225.00	£ 250.00
Website Fees	£ 40.00	£ 49.99	£ 50.00
Subscriptions	£ 1,119.00	£ 1,379.40	£ 1,500.00
IT equipment	£ 750.00	£ -	£ 750.00
sub total	£ 2,094.00	£ 1,654.39	£ 2,550.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 60,357.36	£ 43,585.46	£ 79,274.60
Deficit/Surplus	£ 2,642.64	£ 18,814.54	-£ 13,274.60

Response to Planning Application 53/24/0007 – Reserved Matters following outline application 53/21/0010. 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