



Minutes of meeting of Cotford St Luke Parish Council held on Thursday 20th March 2025, at The Community Centre, Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, TA4 1HZ

Present: Cllr Draper-Gammon, Cllr Birch, Cllr McCrea, Cllr Harrison and Cllr Freeman – arrived at 7.10pm
In attendance 2 members of the public, Somerset Cllrs Best and Sully and Helen McGladdery – Parish Clerk and RFO

“Have Your Say”

One resident asked for an update on the previous concerns with trees obscuring streetlights, the Clerk advised this had been reported and chased but will continue to pursue.

Action: The Clerk to contact SC

Meeting starts: 7.04pm

111/25 To receive and approve apologies for absence.
Somerset Cllr Rigby – attending another meeting

112/25 To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations.
None

113/25 To approve the draft minutes of:
The Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 20th February 2025
The draft minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.
Action: To be added to the website

114/25 To receive reports from:

7.10pm Cllr Freeman arrived

a. Somerset Councillors

Cllr Sully gave a verbal report and detailed SC financial position and budget. Increase in Council tax, permission from central Government to raise Council tax an additional 2.5%.

He advised if the PC provided details of where the lighting would be required on the top path above the youth shelter, he will liaise with SC to obtain quotes. The Clerk had previously forwarded a request for double yellow lines in Graham Way and Highways have advised local consultation and evidence would be required to action this.

Action:

1. The Clerk to forward a map of area for lights
2. Cllr Freeman to meet with Cllr Sully and SC representatives to look at possible options
3. Cllr McCrea to assist with double yellow lines local consultation and evidence

b. Cotford St Luke Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Report distributed to Councillors

115/25 Clerks report

- a. Update on actions since previous meeting**
 - Chased SC re trees overhanging lampposts
 - Draft minutes on Website

- Dog bin emptying, safety inspection and Highways additional cuts quote signed and returned to SC
- Picnic benches ordered, problem with delivery, so currently being re-arranged with a new contractor
- Two new bank accounts opened and CIL funds and Reserves now in dedicated accounts
- HSBC account closed and Credit card cancelled
- Parsons Landscapes instructed and grass cutting for 2025 commenced
- Updated Internal audit action list added to the website
- Planning response submitted to SC
- SRA grant application submitted
- Pickleball net purchase deferred until court ready to use
- Meeting planned with Chris Groves associates (tree survey company) to determine requirements and plan surveys
- Pension policy forwarded to Peninsula pensions
- VAT claim submitted for 1/2/25-28/2/25

b. Details of correspondence received since the last meeting.

- Multiple requests from external auditors and The Clerk submitted all information requested
- Three residents raised concerns over trees – investigations ongoing and some work completed
- One resident had queries on tree policy

116/25

Finance

a. Details of Receipts and Payment since the previous meeting

Receipts:

HSBC Interest	£74.61
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Payments:

Mobile Phone - February	£8.50
Complete weed control	£811.20
Unity bank service charge	£6.00

b. Details of invoices for approval

M J Fletcher – Bench installation	£355.00
Brozap – Benches	£2,896.80
Brozap picnic benches	£3,552.00
PKF External Audit	£2,508.00
Courtcare, tennis court and MUGA	£3,310.00
Glendale Emergency Tree work	£1980.23
Somerset Council bin charges	
& Safety inspections J/F/M	£330.17
Clerks Expenses/Clerks allowance	
& mileage(J/F/M)	£123.47
SC Pensions – March	£290.22
HMRC – Tax and NI – March	£236.66

The Clerk's March salary was also paid in this period

c. To receive budget to spend report – attached to the minutes

d. To receive update on External Audit

A challenge was received from a member of the public; therefore, the external auditors were required to investigate, unfortunately for confidentiality reasons they are unable to share details of the challenge and their work is charged to the PC. The additional charge for this work is £1,775. The Clerk has supplied all the additional information that was requested, and the audit has concluded. The Full report can be found on the PC website.

Somerset Cllr Best requested permission to speak, and this was granted by the Chair. He explained how the PC was in a very unusual position a year ago when not only all Councillors but in addition the Clerk resigned. Therefore, SC made a s91 order to enable the PC to be functional. Cllr Best became the acting Responsible financial officer (until a Clerk was appointed) and completed the 2023/24 audit. This was a challenging situation, as Cllr Best also had to reconcile the year end accounts and liaised with the internal auditor. The internal auditor's report flagged many items to be remedied (action plan on website). Cllr Best has remained working with the Parish Council in an advisory capacity until the audit was concluded. He stated that he was pleased the audit has finally been signed off and that he was pleased he could assist Cotford St Luke in these unprecedented times. The Chair expressed her thanks on behalf of the Council for the work Cllr Best has carried out. Cllr Best will no longer be assisting the PC in an advisory capacity.

The Conclusion of audit was approved by Councillors

Action: Conclusion of audit to be added to noticeboards and website. Auditor report to be added to website

e. To set a budget for the purchase of Local Artwork for the Community Hall

Deferred pending further information.

Action: Cllr Birch to obtain information ahead of the April meeting.

f. To approve submitting an Expression of Interest application to access Section 106 funds from Somerset Council for planters in Cotford St Luke

It was agreed to progress an expression of interest application to access S106 Funding.

Action: Cllr McCrea to obtain costs and ideas for the April meeting

g. To agree to set up a HR committee and Sub committee for the management of staff

Councillors agreed to set up a HR committee for the management of staff

Action: Schedule a HR committee meeting, with agenda item to set up Sub-committee and devolve powers

h. To discuss offering an additional grant to the PCC Youth Club

Cllr Draper-Gammon gave details of a meeting she attended with the Church, PCSO's and Youth Club to discuss anti-social behaviour from a small group of youths. The Youth Club runs a weekly group and in addition has a youth worker for outreach work, and has been actively involved in diffusing situations in the Parish.

The PC granted £1000, to the youth club early this financial year. There remains £400 of unallocated funds for grants, so it was agreed to pass this on to the Youth Club.

It was also agreed to investigate adding Youth Provision as a budget item when setting the 2026/27 budget.

Action: The Clerk to arrange the payment

i. To approve ordering 6 signs with the 'how to report a crime' information on them and discuss locations around the village

Councillors decided to purchase 2 signs, as they felt 6 was too many and may give an inaccurate image of crime in the area.

Action: The Clerk to purchase 2 signs from Carly Press at a cost of £120.00

j. To discuss financially supporting the Community Centre to replace the broken lights in the School car park

Deferred pending further information

117/25

Planning Applications:

To agree response to planning applications received:

Amendment to planning application 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

Resolved: No comment

Action: The Clerk to submit the response and check if this application will go to planning committee for decision or delegated powers

118/25 Cotford St Luke flood defence system: ditches, culverts, attenuation ponds and floodplain:

a. To discuss a Flood defence survey

The Clerk had obtained three quotes. Councillors agreed to review the information and add as an agenda item for April

119/25 Amenities and assets:

a. Tennis courts: to receive update on works carried out and approve additional funds to complete works to the court

The initial clean of the Court has been carried out and the old net and posts have been removed and disposed of.

A quote of £1,380 from Courtcare was approved to carryout repairs and paint the lines for tennis and pickleball.

b. To approve quote to carry out weed control spray on the MUGA and cleaning and re-sanding of adjoining path

A quote of £1,380 was approved from Courtcare to clean the paved area, treat with biocide, and apply sand. Apply moss killer to MUGA, remove moss and powerbrush. Apply biocide to the whole area.

c. To discuss investigating costs to install lighting and CCTV to cover tennis courts/MUGA and Youth Shelter

Deferred pending further information

120/25 Governance

a. To adopt Parish Council Publication Scheme

b. To adopt the Parish Council Equal Opportunities policy

c. To adopt Vexatious Communications and Complaints policy

Councillors agreed to the above policies and they were adopted.

Action: To be added to the website

121/25 Suggested items from Councillors for inclusion in the next meeting.

- Approve Clerk moving up a SCP and confirmation of arrangements for additional hours
- Double yellow lines
- Hall artwork
- Community centre/school car park lights
- Flood defence survey
- Purchase of benches for tennis court and around tree
- To discuss applying for trees from the Woodland Trust
- Update on expression of interest for S106 funds
- Tree survey results and action plan
- Annual Parish meeting invitees

122/25 Next meeting: Thursday 24th April 2025, 19.00, Community Centre. – Please note amended date

Chair sign.....

Date.....

Attachments:

1. Budget to spend report:

Budget to spend report

Receipts	Actual	Budget	Variance
Precept	£62,000.00	£62,000.00	£ -
Interest	£ 1,374.17	£ -	£ 1,374.17
VAT Refund	£ 5,762.01	£ -	£ 5,762.01
Other	£ 3,341.81	£ -	£ 3,341.81
Total	£72,477.99	£62,000.00	£10,477.99
Payments			
VAT	£ 4,864.98	£ -	£ 4,864.98
Salary/HMRC	£ 7,373.41	£16,104.96	-£ 8,731.55
Pension	£ 1,484.24	£ -	£ 1,484.24
Clerks allowance/mileage	£ 78.00	£ 254.40	-£ 176.40
Admin/Hallhire/Membership/ stationery/Audit/elections/bank fees	£ 1,394.96	£ 2,509.00	-£ 1,114.04
Insurance	£ 920.16	£ 1,483.00	-£ 562.84
Phone	£ 31.50	£ 80.00	-£ 48.50
Training	£ 375.00	£ 210.00	£ 165.00
Grass cutting/hedges	£11,581.50	£17,645.00	-£ 6,063.50
Ditches	£ 1,177.00	£ -	£ 1,177.00
Trees	£ 1,595.00	£ 2,000.00	-£ 405.00
Weed Killing	£ 2,283.20	£ 3,292.00	-£ 1,008.80
Safety Inspections	£ 400.46	£ 4,500.00	-£ 4,099.54
Tennis/MUGA/Misc estates	£ 2,372.73	£ 3,250.00	-£ 877.27
CIL	£ 398.00		£ 398.00
Bins	£ 4,364.84	£ 2,935.00	£ 1,429.84
Play Equipment/contingency	£ -	£ 5,500.00	-£ 5,500.00
Grants	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,400.00	-£ 400.00
IT	£ 1,936.39	£ 2,094.00	-£ 157.61
S137	£ 25.00	£ 100.00	-£ 75.00
Total	£43,656.37	£63,357.36	-£19,700.99