



Minutes of meeting of Cotford St Luke Parish Council held on **Thursday 18th September 2025** at 7pm.

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

In attendance: 2 members of the public, Somerset Cllr Mike Rigby, Somerset LCN link Officer Michelle Brookes and Helen McGladdery - Clerk and RFO

“Have Your Say”

Michelle Brooks - LCN link officer was present she advised the LCN has a new Chair - who is also a Norton Fitzwarren Councillor and he wants to work closely with all parishes in the LCN network.

Meeting starts: 7.05pm

- 166/25** **To receive and approve apologies for absence.**
Somerset Cllr Sully
- 167/25** **To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations.**
Cllr Birch agenda item 170/25 as partner a trustee
Cllr Freeman agenda item 175/25 as one of the trees is adjacent to his house
- 168/25** **To approve the draft minutes of:**
a. The Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 19th June 2025
b. Extraordinary meeting held on Tuesday 29th July 2025
The draft minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair

Action: The Clerk to add to the website

- 169/25** **To receive reports from:**
a. Somerset Councillors.
Cllr Rigby gave a verbal report detailing the Somerset Council financial position. He advised he is pushing for the road resurfacing on the bridge and entrance to Cotford St Luke to be escalated. He continues to have dialogue with Central Government over the lack of mobile phone signal in Cotford St Luke

b. Police report

24 calls to 101 and 999 in Cotford St Luke in August, 4 Violence against a person, 1 domestic incident, 2 neighbour issues, 1 malicious call and 1 mental health incident.

170/25

Community Association

a. To receive report from Trustees

The treasurer/secretary of the Community Association was present and gave an overview of the current financial position of the Community Association. Financial supporting documents were distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

b. To approve payment of deep clean of Community Hall/communal areas and toilets

As a financial need for assistance was proven Councillors made the following resolution:

Resolution: To make a grant of £500 to the Community Association to assist with cleaning costs. The current contractor will be given notice and a new company appointed to carry out a deep cleaning of the hall, toilets and communal areas

Action: The Clerk to schedule the payment

c. Agree ways of working between school, PC and CA (new agreement will be drafted) and agree PC contribution to caretaking costs for Community Centre, MUGA and tennis court

It was agreed a maximum of 2 hours a week would be required for caretaking. The School caretaker would be contracted out by the school. The Councillors discussed the financial implications and made the following resolution.

Resolution: To appoint a caretaker and split the cost 50/50 with the Community Association

171/25

Clerks Report which will include all matters arising from previous minutes and items of interest

- Minutes, internal audit report, annual governance statement and accounting statement added to website
- AGAR submitted to external auditor, queries received relating to expenditure and Clerk forwarded all information to external auditor
- Hallam approached re S106 contributions once planning received, response below *"Hallam would be happy to agree to pay the contribution "prior to commencement, but not at the same time as signing the S106"*
- Correspondence ongoing with SC in relating to tree adjacent to tennis courts

- Work completed on the tennis courts, sign installed and pickleball net purchased
- Parsons Landscapes cut back overgrown vegetation around tennis court and by youth shelter
- Cllr Sully meeting electrical contractors to discuss lighting “top path”
- NFPC confirmed their youth shelter was removed by a local scrap metal merchant at no charge to the PC
- Weed killing continues around the parish

Action: Cllr McCrea to contact Trevor Parsons for a quote to cover/make safe the concrete, if the shelter were to be removed by the scrap metal company (they would need to cut the metal and it would not be safe).

172/25

Finance

a. Details of Receipts and Payment since the previous meeting

Receipts:

CIL Account interest	£97.73
Reserves Account interest	£720.19
Slide and play refund (fete)	£422.00
Somerset Council -SRA grant tree work	£1,425.00

Payments:

SC Pensions - June	£302.86
HMRC - June	£310.17
H McGladdery - June expenses	£121.91
T Parsons - Bench and noticeboard installation	£2,220.00
Bank service charge	£6.00
Mobile phone - July	£9.04
Somerset Council - Quarter 1 services	£2,261.54
Somerset Web services - Google suite	£950.40
Rheos - 1st payment (flood survey)	£1,150.00
Parsons - June	£1,639.76
Parkers - fell 890/888a and deadwood 863	£2,670.00
Heartsafe Defib cabinet	£908.95
H McGladdery - July expenses	£6.75
SC Pensions - July	£297.16
HMRC - July	£301.46
Pickleball net	£149.00
Access Insurance - fete	£464.49
Bank service charge	£6.00
Mobile phone - August	£9.04
First Aid - Fete	£40.00
Slide and Play - Fete	£422.00
Signs express - Fete	£162.00
Play inspection co- Tennis court/Muga	£230.40
Cris Groves - Tree inspection report	£1,020.00
Carly Press - Report a crime and Tennis signs	£246.00

Parish Online	£144.00
Parsons - July	£1,639.76
Parsons - Tennis court work	£240.00
Parsons - Laurel Youth shelter	£787.20
Complete weed control - July	£144.00
King - tennis court repairs	£2,940.00
Community Assoc. Hall hire A/M/J/J	£70.00
Narkedesign - Website	£225.00
HMRC - August	£374.13
SC Pensions - August	£345.36
H McGladdery - August expenses	£6.74
Bank Service charge	£6.00
Mobile phone - September	£9.04
The Clerks June, July and August salaries were paid in this period	

b. Details of invoices for approval

Quantock entertainment services – Fete	£120.00
Parsons – August	£1639.76
Rheos Environmental (Flood survey final invoice)	£3,500.00

Action: The Clerk to schedule the payments, once the Flood defence survey has been checked

c. To receive budget to spend report - Attached

d. To receive the conclusion of Audit

Deferred as not received from External Auditor

Action: The Clerk to add to the November agenda

e. To receive Recommendations from Councillors for S106 Allotment and Community Hall applications

Resolved: Cllr Draper Gammon to complete the application to Somerset Council for the S106 Allotment funds for planter, trees and wildflower areas in the Parish. Cllr McCrea requested that bulbs be added.

Action: Cllr Draper-Gammon to complete the application and submit to the Clerk

f. To discuss the purchase of Christmas lights and options for installation

Various options were explored but unfortunately Somerset Council do not give permission for Christmas lights to be installed on lightning columns, so this will not proceed

g. To discuss quotes received for production and delivery of a Parish newsletter

Quotes were discussed for the production of a newsletter and how it would be distributed

Resolved:

1. A quote from Carly Press of £159 was approved to produce 950 newsletter
2. Volunteers will be requested to assist with delivery

Actions:

1. Cllr Birch to add a Facebook and Website post to ask for volunteers
2. The Clerk to collate list of volunteers
3. Cllr Birch to work on newsletter

173/25

Planning Applications:

a. To agree response to planning applications received –

None at time of setting agenda

b. Update on Hallam and Lovell planning applications and S106 agreement

Hallam - Planning permission has now been granted. The PC has requested that S106 contributions are generalised to Youth Provision rather than a specific Youth worker. The play equipment contribution is made on commencement not completion, and paid directly to the PC rather than SC - Hallam agreed on all counts

Lovell - Work has commenced on site, the Clerk and Chair have attended an initial meeting with Lovell and made requests of clear communication, adhere to a robust construction management plan and a 24 hour contact for onsite issues - Lovell have confirmed a community event will be held for residents to see plans and a leaflet drop made. Contact numbers for emergencies and queries will be passed on to the PC.

c. To confirm suggestions for new street names

At the time of the meeting, no suggestions had been received from residents. It was agreed that the suggestions from the developer had no links to the Community, so the PC will forward alternative suggestions linked Hospital patients

Action:

1. Cllr Birch to finalise the list of suggestions
2. Confirmed names to be sent to the Clerk before Thursday 24th September
3. The Clerk to submit the names to SC by 25th September

174/25

Amenities and assets:

a. Tennis courts:

i. To review tennis court usage and new booking system

The Tennis court has been well used with 167 bookings and 67 people registered. Concerns were raised about youths climbing over the perimeter fence.

Resolved: A budget of £150 was set to purchase additional signage to say “No climbing and to advise they will be recorded on CCTV”. In addition it was agreed to add a future agenda item to discuss security measures.

Actions:

1. The Clerk to order signs
2. Future agenda item added to discuss security measures

ii. To discuss purchase of leaf blower to keep the surface clear

Resolved: A budget of £150 was set to purchase a leaf blower.

Actions:

1. Cllr Freeman to advise Clerk of suitable model
2. The Clerk to arrange the purchase

iii. To approve the purchase of a storage container for the pickleball net

Resolved: To defer the purchase until the spring, when the court will be used again

Actions:

1. The Clerk to add to March agenda
2. The Clerk to advise pickleball club

b. To receive update following meeting with Police to highlight risk areas of illegal encampments in the Parish

Cllr McCrea and Cllr Harrison met with representatives from Avon and Somerset police. They walked the areas in the parish and confirmed that they believed Cotford St Luke was a low risk area, due to the vicinity from the M5 and only one shop. Councillors decided to take no further action at present.

c. To discuss quote for repainting the MUGA lines

It was agreed to use the same contractor that recently carried out the work to the tennis court.

Resolved: A quote of £1250 was approved from Mark King

Action: The Clerk to contact the contractor and request the work is scheduled in for early spring

d. To receive the MUGA/Tennis court annual safety inspection report and to agree any work required

The Clerk advised the safety report was received and all matters raised were low risk, therefore, no immediate work required and the situation will be monitored

175/25

Trees and flood reports

- a. To discuss quotes for additional tree works in the Parish highlighted in the tree report**

Quotes were discussed and The Clerk advised that certain trees required a TPO planning application, these are free of charge to the Parish Council. The Clerk has commenced one application, but requires additional information, SC have advised they can provide this information to complete the applications for a cost of £16.50. The Clerk continues to pursue SC to carry out work on the laurel hedge by the Chapel.

Resolved:

1. A quote of £2,755 was approved from Parkers tree care for tree no. 869,882, 883, 885 and 888 highlighted in the tree report.
2. A quote from Somerset Council of £16.50 was approved for additional information
3. A quote of £1,970 from Parsons Landscapes was approved to carry out a one off cut to the Laurel hedge and overhanging trees on the corner of the path that runs by The Chapel.

Actions:

1. The Clerk to instruct Parkers and advised a Councillor will meet them on site at commencement and completion of work
2. The Clerk will request SC provides the additional information required for the TPOs
3. The Clerk to instruct Parsons Landscapes for the Laurel Hedge and overhanging trees

b. To discuss quotes for reinspection of trees highlighted in the report

Two quotes were received of £622 and £180.

Resolved: To ask Cannington College if they would be able to carry out the inspections

Action: The Clerk to contact Cannington College to ask if they would re-inspect trees highlighted in the report requiring an addition inspection

c. To approve setting up a working group to assist with flood defence survey recommendations/actions

It was agreed to set up a working party made up of Councillors and members of the public to assist with the flood defence survey work

Actions:

1. Cllr Draper-Gammon to write up details of what the working group will be for
2. Cllr Birch to add a Facebook post to request volunteers

d. To receive an update on the progress of the flood defence survey

The survey has now been completed. This will be examined fully by Councillors and the Clerk, recommendations to be added to a future agenda

Action: The Clerk to forward the report to all Councillors

- e. **Discuss drafting a crown land and trees policy and discuss seeking legal advice about how to go forwards with both the policy, and ensuring the crown land and trees in the village are safe for use by residents and maintained at least to a minimum standard**

Resolved: It was agreed to set up a meeting with SC officers, SC Councillor, The Clerk and Chair to progress this matter. The Parish Council will obtain quotes for legal advice

Actions:

1. The Clerk to set up meeting with SC
2. The Clerk to obtain legal advice quotes
3. The Clerk to compose a Crown land tree policy for the PC
4. Crown Land tree policy to be added to November agenda for adoption
5. Cllr Draper-Gammon to contact SALC for advice about legal services

- f. **To discuss quotes received for ditch clearance and working with landowners to keep the ditches clear from debris**

Lovells and Hallam have advised they will accept the quote from Parsons Landscapes and reimburse the PC for the work. The third landowner will confirm next week.

Resolved: If the third land owner declines the quote, then the PC will pay £676 to have the work completed. A multiyear agreement will be drafted in the Spring between landowners and the PC

Actions:

1. The Clerk to instruct Parsons Landscapes to commence the work
2. The Clerk to send riparian responsibility letters to residents who own a section of the ditch network to remind them of their responsibility
3. The Clerk to contact residents adjacent to the ditch network to advise the contractor has been instructed

176/25 To agree Councillors areas of responsibilities and duties required to be carried out

Resolved: The following positions were agreed:

- **Open spaces/play areas/Rights of Way/ meet with contractors**
Cllr Freeman and Cllr McCrea
- **Tree monitor** - Cllr Harrison
- **Crown Land trees** - Cllr Draper-Gammon and The Clerk
- **Flood defence survey** - Cllr Draper-Gammon and working party
- **Finance and Planning** – Cllr Birch
- **Admin/Social media, Communication/Correspondence** – The Clerk
- **Website new articles**- Cllr Birch, Cllr Draper-Gammon
- **Website agendas/policies** - The Clerk
- **Police liaison** – Cllr McCrea

- **Community Association liaison** - Cllr Harrison, Cllr Draper-Gammon
- **Noticeboards** – Cllr McCrea and Cllr Harrison

177/25 To approve meeting frequency and dates from now until the end of 2026

Resolved: Councillors agreed to the following meeting dates:

2025 – 20th November – Draft budget & internal audit

2026 – 15th January – Precept request, **19th March, 21st May** – Annual meeting, Elect Chair and Audit **18th June, 17th September** – meeting dates and policies and

19th November – Draft budget & internal audit

Actions:

1. The website to be updated
2. The Clerk advice the Community Association of the bookings

178/25 To review all Parish Council policies

The policies were distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

Resolved: Councillors approved the following policies:

- Cil Funds
- Complaints procedures
- Co-option procedures
- Equal opportunities
- Financial regulations
- Grants
- Privacy notice
- Publication scheme
- Risk assessment
- Social Media
- Standing orders
- Vexatious Communications complaints

Action: The Clerk to add to the website

179/25 Items from Councillors for inclusion in the next meeting.

- Conclusion of Audit
- Internal audit
- Half Yearly statement
- Purchase of new laptop for The Clerk
- Safety measures for Tennis Court
- Crown tree policy
- Youth Shelter
- Co-option of new Councillor

180/25 Next meeting: Parish Council meeting 20th November 2025 at 7pm The Community Centre.

Meeting closed: 8.50pm

Signed by Chair

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Attachment:

1. Budget to spend report

Receipts	Actual	Budget	Variance
Precept	£65,000.00	£65,000.00	£ -
Interest	£ 817.92	£ 400.00	£ 417.92
VAT Refund	£ 790.23	£ -	£ 790.23
Other	£ 1,847.00	£ -	£ -
Total	£68,455.15	£65,400.00	£ 1,208.15
Payments			
VAT	£ 4,018.72	£ -	£ 4,018.72
Salary/HMRC	£ 6,400.53	£18,375.00	-£ 11,974.47
Pension	£ 1,267.88	£ 4,500.00	-£ 3,232.12
Clerks allowance/mileage	£ 97.67	£ 470.00	-£ 372.33
Admin/Hallhire/Membership/ stationery/Audit/elections/bank fees	£ 609.58	£ 494.00	£ 115.58
Memberships	£ 1,103.39	£ 1,000.00	£ 103.39
Audit	£ 125.00	£ 600.00	-£ 475.00
Insurance	£ 1,657.13	£ 1,500.00	£ 157.13
Phone	£ 44.66	£ 102.00	-£ 57.34
Training	£ 80.00	£ 300.00	-£ 220.00
Grass cutting/hedges	£ 8,714.69	£22,000.00	-£ 13,285.31
Ditches	£ 1,150.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 150.00
Trees	£ 4,635.06	£ 5,000.00	-£ 364.94
Weed Killing	£ 796.00	£ 2,433.60	-£ 1,637.60
Safety Inspections	£ 337.44	£ 2,500.00	-£ 2,162.56
Tennis/MUGA/Misc estates	£ 5,129.49	£ 4,000.00	£ 1,129.49
CIL	£ 3,867.64	£ -	£ 3,867.64
Bins	£ 541.32	£ 850.00	-£ 308.68
Play Equipment/contingency	£ 759.95	£ 5,000.00	-£ 4,240.05
Grants	£ 1,061.49	£ 6,500.00	-£ 5,438.51
IT	£ 1,155.00	£ 2,550.00	-£ 1,395.00
S137	£ -	£ 100.00	-£ 100.00
Total	£43,552.64	£79,274.60	-£ 35,721.96