WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

West & Middle Chinnock Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 8th October 2025

Cllr Bennett - Chair
Cllr Cawley
Cllr Griffiths
Clerk: Kim Duller
4 Member of the General Public
Cllr Ashton
Cllr Cockrem

25/1366 **Public Forum**: **i)** Youth Shelter: NV raised regarding rubbish being left. Believed to be youths from the village. NV recommended more regular checking. **Action: The Chair offered to deal with this matter. ii)** Pruning Debris: NV reported debris being left after SLL have cut the hedges. (End of Youth Shelter). **Action: The Chair offered to check the contract. Included in discussion was actual specification of the length of the hedge and how far it should be cut. The Chair confirmed he had seen the contract. Action: The Chair said he had seen information in the "box of doom" and would check. iii) E**xtra Salt locations (Bags): Confirmation was given by CP previous Councillor, that he still had bags of salt on his driveway. The Chair confirmed he also had some, Cllr Cawley confirmed all bins were half full. No one could remember if SC will be filling the grit bins, despite being previously minuted.

25/1367 **Apologies for Absence:** Kim Duller, Clerk. Clerk cover from Zannette Bougourd.

25/1368 **Declarations of Interest: i)** Cllr Ashton, Hinton St George, Parish Council, Merriott Parish Council and Somerset Council. Member, National Farmers Union and National Association for Shooting and Conservation and Somerset Rivers Authority. **ii)** Cllr Bennett, Playground Committee. **iii)** Cllr Cawley, Allotments.

25/1369 **To Approve and Sign as Correct, the Minutes from the Parish Council meeting 10th September 2025. Resolved. All in Favour.**

25/1370 **Matters Arising Not on Agenda:** A list had been submitted, but were not included in the meeting.

25/1371 **Somerset Council, Councillors Report:** No Representation from either Ward Councillors. Newsletter previously circulated.

25/1372 **Planning:**

a. **Applications:**
   i) Fortunes Well 22/00724/FUL, Higher Street, West Chinnock: No Further Update**.** Still has not gone to committee, no further information received. **Action: Follow up with Cllr Hewitson.**
   ii) Planning Application Notification: 25/02461/TCA: 47 Higher Street, West Chinnock Crewkerne. Tree Surgery Works – for information only.
b. **Determinations: None**
c. **Planning Enforcement:**
   i) **Smith's Hill Development:** Clerk has reported issue to Highways and Enforcement team regarding water pipe draining directly on to the highway and has chased for a response.

25/1373 **Finance:**

a. **To Approve Qtr 2 25/26 Accounts: Subject to internal audit**: As Clerk and Internal Auditor (NC) not at the meeting. **Action: C/F to November meeting.**
b. **Feedback External PKF Audit:** Clerk reported all Clerks have had a difficult time in terms of analysis with external audit. The stand in Clerk suggested the PC commend the work which the Clerk had achieved for West & Middle Chinnock Audit.
c. **To Pay Any Routine Invoices:**
   i) Pata Payroll, 2Qtr Payroll services £52.35. Resolved. All in Favour.
d. **Delegated Powers Payments:**
   i) Clerks Salary September 2025 £502.12. Resolved. All in Favour.

ii) HMRC and NI September 2025, £145.72: Resolved. All in Favour.
iv) Grit Bin Replacement Poop Hill, £131.94 (Inc VAT): Resolved. All in Favour. It was confirmed the Clerk was in liaison with the company who had wrecked the bin and is seeking compensation.

25/1374 **Allotments:**

i) Plot 20 C&D has been let: Contracts can be drawn up once Cllr Cawley has strimmed the site and cut the hedge back, as previously agreed.

ii) Clerk is liaising with the National Allotment society regarding the recent plot inspections.

25/1375 **Matters arising from 10th September 2025 meeting:**

a. **Dog Fouling update:** Still waiting for official feedback from Cllr Hewitson after he had been told there is no Dog Fouling Officer. Confirmation requested on which department this now sits in. Discussion by various Cllrs going over similar points discussed previously. No Action agreed from discussion as Cllr Cockrem explained there was nothing further that could be done. **Action agreed: Cllr Ashton to follow up with Claire Warman, as it was discussed that she was still responsible. (Cllr Hewitson had previously confirmed she wasn't and that the portfolio now comes under the locality team).**
b. **Broken Baby Swing at the Rec: Discussion on the swing and why it had not been ordered. Resolved to purchase £221 plus VAT.**
c. **Register of Interest Forms:** The Chair reminded all Councillors that they must be updated and explained that a new ROI must be completed every 5 years, but can be updated each year in between. There was a discussion claiming the Clerk had shredded the ROI forms.

25/1376 **Reports & Correspondence:**

a. **Damage to Verge and Grit Bin on Poop Hill:** Highways made safe the verge and KD has dug out the verge and put a slab down. A discussion was held on the need for support at the back of the bin for when it arrives. **Action: The Chair said he would organise something with Cllr Cawley.**
b. **Withdrawal of Support for Windows 10. GDPR** Implications **for Councillors. Briefing Note and IT Policy.** The Chair questioned why the Parish Council was having this discussion again as felt it had been discussed enough. The stand in Clerk reiterated the statutory issues relating to Assertion 10 (SAPPP 2025), which the W&MC Clerk had previously explained on a number of occasions. The minimum standard was reiterated and also the dangers for not being compliant with GDPR. The Clerk re-advised the national guidance of all Parish Councils having a .GOV from April 2026. The previous discussions were repeated around it not currently being mandatory, but will be. The Clerk advised the PC should be ready. The Chair queried "next week". The Clerk advised, as soon as possible. **No Action Agreed.**
c. **Somerset Council Community Working Review:** Cllr Ashton agreed to lead on this as part of the LCN reviews. This also related to playing fields and recreation grounds. **Action: Cllr Ashton agreed to lead on this.** Cllr Ashton gave his thoughts on the review and shared a number of recommendations. Concerns were raised on the cost of the LCNs and how these are being funded, however Cllr Ashton did also point out some positives.
d. **Notification of Road Closures:** TTRO 1010825 2.011.25 for 2 nights. West Coker Hill Hollow to Coker Bridge & High Street East Chinnock. (All notifications put on to PC FB book Page and also website).
e. **Clerk Report by Exception:** i) Cows escaped from land on Smiths Hill into Smiths Hill house development, with Cows in danger of escaping on to Hollowell Hill. Owner of cows notified and situation managed.
f. **Footpaths: i)** Cllr Cockrem said that all issues on footpaths at the Rec were now sorted and wasn't sure why this was being discussed again. She confirmed she had taken pictures of the bridge.

Cllr Cawley raised concerns again about the hedge. Cllr Cockrem said she had climbed into the ditch and taken photos of the wood on the bridge and in her opinion that the bridge was safe and the wood was not rotten. The Chair and Cllr Cockrem said they were satisfied this was normal wear and tear. Cllr Cockrem explained again she had reported the bridge concern in March 25 and that it is classed as medium priority and therefore not a threat to life. The Chair said due diligence had been completed and that the PC could take no further responsibility. A discussion was held between Cllr Cockrem and Cllr Cawley with Cllr Cockrem questioning the previously minuted visit by the footpath officer who is a woman. Cllr Cawley confirmed that the bridge had been inspected by a man. Cllr Cockrem said that perhaps there is a new footpaths officer. **ii)** Report of maintenance concerns on a footpath, location between Broadstone Farm and Eastfield Lane. A discussion was help on the location, including a discussion on diversion of another path behind Layne Terrace. Cllr Cockrem explained issues relating to the cost of diversion of the Layne Terrace Path. **Action: Cllr Cockrem agreed to follow up.**

g. **Parish Councillor Recruitment:** Following a recent social media post on the village FB page, a discussion was held regarding the perception of the Parish Council and expectations of residents in relation to PC's powers and funding. It was discussed that there are a number of "can do" individuals who go ahead and fundraise and are willing to lead projects, and those that are not willing to engage. Concerns around passivity and exception without willingness to action. The summary of the discussion is that if residents would like action, they should lead efforts. Further discussion on the need for volunteers and fundraisers. It was reiterated that those who use Parish facilities should become involved on the Parish Council. Cllr Cockrem said the Parish Council should respond to the Social media post, but not as the Parish Council, she would respond as an individual. Cllr Cockrem said that the Clerk posting information and the PC Facebook page after 3 weeks was a waste of time. Cllr Cockrem pointed out that there a lot of research had been done on the Recreation Ground, but that there was frustration that more had not been done.

h. **Drains, Potholes and Hedges:** The Chair stressed the need for residents to report pot holes. The Chair thanked Keith Dodge for clearing the drains. Cllr Ashton said that he would try and get additional information of drains clearing. Councillor Cockrem queried a discussion regarding Hedges at the Rec, from the last Minutes. The Chair said there had been no discussion, and then remembered the discussion. He asked Cllr Ashton to help cut the hedge at the back of the Pavilion as he knew he had some machinery which could cut it. A discussion was held and it was agreed that Cllrs Cawley, Ashton and Bennett would arrange to cut the hedge.

i. **IT Policy:** The Clerk asked for Approval of the IT Policy which had previously been circulated. Cllr Griffiths said she had queries. The Chair said it would not be approved at the meeting.

j. **Octagon Theatre Loan Agreed:** Cllr Ashton explained the basis of the loan and how the Octagon Theatre would be funded, going forward.

k. **Blocked Drains:** Keith Dodge reported that he had cleared the **i)** Drains at the Junction of Poop Hill and Layne Terrace and Smokey Hole. He explained he had some success with clearing them and water was now running, but that the drains were full of rock and silted up. Also **ii)** Drains coming down Hollowell Hill were blocked, (3rd on the right hand side heading north.) The pipe work is all blocked and needs attention.

25/1377 **Correspondence & Matters for Wednesday 12th November 2025 Agenda.**

a. Agenda items, including Members Reports: To be forwarded to the Clerk before Friday 7th November 2025.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 12th November 2025

7.30pm, Village Hall, West Chinnock