

# WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

## West & Middle Chinnock Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Cllr Bennett - Chair

Cllr Cawley

Clerk: Kim Duller

4 Members of the General Public

Cllr Ashton

Cllr Cockrem

25/1390

**Public Forum: Community Playground:** i) **Query relating to the use of the Youth Shelter and reports of vandalism.** A discussion was held and it was agreed there had not been any further incidents. **Action: Clerk to check SSL contract vis a vis cutting of the boundary hedge. Cllr Bennett to continue to review Allotment documents pertaining to the statutory use of the land.**

25/1391

**Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Griffiths.

25/1392

**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.

25/1393

**To Approve and Sign as Correct, the Minutes from the Parish Council meeting 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Resolved. All in Favour.**

25/1394

**Matters Arising Not on Agenda: None**

25/1395

**Somerset Council, Councillors Report:** Councillor Hewitson had sent apologies. The November Newsletter had been previously circulated to Councillors. The Clerk confirmed that a list is now available showing all road reported defects, allowing Parish Councils to track progress of repairs.

25/1396

### **Planning:**

#### **a. Applications:**

- i. **Fortunes Well 22/00724/FUL, Higher Street, West Chinnock:** No further update. **Action: C/F Clerk to request an update from Cllr Hewitson.**
- ii. **25/02179/HOU at Little Piece, Duckpool Lane West Chinnock:** No comments from the Parish Council.

#### **b. Determinations: None**

#### **c. Planning Enforcement:**

##### **i) Smiths Hill Development:**

- i. **Query regarding unlawful felling of Trees:** The Clerk is awaiting a response regarding situation regarding trees and TPO's on the site. The Tree Officer has visited the site and agreed to provide feedback. **Action: Clerk to circulate report when it arrives.**
- ii. **Query regarding water run from the development:** The Clerk reported she has a meeting with Lee from the Highways team on 15.12.25. Cllr Ashton offered to attend the meeting with the Clerk. **Action: Clerk to keep the PC updated.**

25/1397

### **Finance:**

#### **a. To Pay Routine Invoices:**

- i. **SLL November invoice SLL36388 £86.81 Inc. VAT:** Neil Cochran, internal auditor confirmed the invoice was correct. **Resolved, All in Favour.**
- ii. **Allotment Society Annual Charge: £84.00. Resolved, All in Favour.**

**b. 26/27 Budget Review:** A discussion took place. It was agreed to delay the budget review and precept meeting until January 2026 when further information is anticipated from Somerset Council regarding the Council tax base, election costs, and tree survey costs for the recreation ground. **Resolved, All in Favour.**

- c. **Clerks Expenses Qtr. 1 and 2 Total £52.00:** Hall Heating £12.00, Depreciation £40.00. **Resolved, All in Favour.**
- d. **500gb External Hard drive £39.00 (Assertion 10):** Further information regarding the need for an external drive was requested. Payment was declined at this stage. **Action: Clerk to advise the PC after Assertion 10 training.**
- e. **IOC Registration Charge £52.00:** Statutory requirement for all Parish Councils. **Action: Clerk to register with the IOC and pay the annual charge. Resolved, All in Favour.**
- f. **Delegated Powers Payments:**
  - i. **Clerks Salary November 2025 £438.17: Resolved.** All in Favour.
  - ii. **HMRC and NI November 2025, £117.72: Resolved.** All in Favour.

25/1398

**Allotments:**

- i. **Bird Flu:** Government guidance update due to the increase in the number of cases nationally. The closest cases currently are Mendip and Wells. **Action: Clerk to share update with Allotment holders who have chickens and also publish on PC Council website and FB page.**

25/1399

**Matters arising from 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025 meeting:**

- a. **Grit Bin Poop Hill: New bin is in place and filled.**
- b. **Registration of Interests:** All ROI completed with 2 exceptions. **Action Clerk to re-issue hard copies to Councillors not currently up to date.**
- c. **Democratic Services and Elections:** The Clerk reported there had been a number of briefings regarding proposal to charge Parish Councils for elections services, both local and National. These remain inconclusive. It was noted that the majority of Parish Clerks had included election costs in their precept.
- d. **Consultation on Proposed New Boundaries, Somerset:** Previously circulated to Councillors. The Clerk confirmed that the consultation had been extended to January, with residents being asked for feedback. A discussion took place and Cllr Ashton explained there had been concern about submitting boundaries to Parliament due to potential judicial challenge. This followed a misunderstanding of a letter from Somerset Council expressing a preference for single-member wards, which was interpreted as meaning exclusively single-member wards. It was noted that some areas should remain two-member wards to avoid dividing communities. Shared Councillor responsibility was considered more practical.
- e. **LCNs:** A meeting had taken place for the Crewkerne and Chard area. Attendance from Parish Councils was reported to be poor.
- f. **Register of Interest Forms:** Two received, two need to be completed. Cllr Ashton does not have to submit a ROI form as his has already been submitted in his other role. **Action: 2 outstanding Cllrs to submit their forms to the Clerk.**
- g. **Parish Councillor Recruitment:** The Clerk has been advised by the Democratic services team to retain the current vacancies by co-option.
- h. **Cricket Net Update:** The Clerk confirmed that SLL advised there would be an increase in grass cutting costs for an additional net. A number of solutions to enable the grass to be cut around the nets without incurring additional costs and safeguard the nets were discussed. **Action: With the agreement of Rose from the Youth Cricket Club it was agreed that the nets would be moved in between the SLL cuts and the cricket club would take responsibility for any further cutting required. SLL would still cut around the area where the nets are, but not close to the nets, inside or out, in order to prevent any damage to the new net. Clerk to inform SLL of outcome. The new net will now be ordered by Rose.**
- i. **Community Playground Maintenance:** Neil Cochran from the Community Playground Committee provided an update. A discussion was held by the Parish Council. The price for the replacement part for the broken horse rocker is £750.00+VAT. **Action: The Parish Council agreed to pay 50% of the cost with the school, subject to a section 137 grant**

application being made by the Community Playground Area Committee, which meets requirements for funding. Due to the costs going up in January 2026, the PC agreed to approve by delegated powers during the Christmas Break with all Parish Councillors being given a final vote via email.

- j. **Defibrillators On-going Maintenance:** Previous costs had been circulated to Councillors in the December Agenda papers. It was confirmed that there is currently £452.00 in the defibrillator bank account, however that the potential on-going cost for the year would be £668.00, subject to usage. **Action: i) Agreement to ringfence the shortfall of £236.00 to the end of the financial year. On-going defibrillator costs to be included in the budget as a separate item under maintenance for 2026 – 27. ii) Clerk to provide statistics to Councillors on usage since they were first installed. iii) Councillors to reconsider purchasing a 3<sup>rd</sup> defibrillator for Middle Chinnock in the 2026-27 budget based on review of the current usage.**
- k. **Youth Goal Storage Recreation Ground:** Neil Cochran confirmed a discussion had taken place with Mark Ryan regarding leaving the nets in their current position during the off season and moving them when the season starts again. **Action: The Chair asked Neil if he would act as liaison for the Parish Council and agree a date with Mark by which the posts would be moved and stored as previously agreed with the Parish Council.**
- l. **CIL Response: Carry Forward.** Clerk has not been able to meet with the Officer responsible for CIL.
- m. **Scott's Way River Bank Maintenance:** Clerk meeting Highways Representative on 15.12.25. Cllr Ashton to attend. **Action: Clerk to feedback to Parish Council after the meeting.**

25/1400

**Reports & Correspondence:**

- a. **Food Waste Recycling:** Previously circulated.
- b. **Sovereign Compliance Inspection Report REF: 54442:** Report circulated. No issues raised.
- c. **Assertion 10 Data Security, GDPR Update, IT Policy, Training:** The Clerk confirmed Training was being booked for the new year for the Clerk and Councillor Griffiths. **Action: The Clerk will be setting up a .GOV account for the Clerks' email address, as well as review whether the current Community Website will meet the statutory requirements in April 2026.**  
**Clerks Report: i) Drains, Potholes and Hedges:** The Clerk confirmed she was continuing to report potholes on a regular basis. Areas of concern include the pipe flowing on to the Road at Hollowell Hill, and drains blocked by rocks and heavy silting on Lower Street, as well as on going issues with the impact of flooding on Scott's Way. **ii) The Chair thanked Gill and Keith Dodge for clearing the drains along Smiths Hill, Lower Street and Hollowell Hill. iii) The stones on the riverbank had been replaced on the riverbank, however this may have changed due to the recent floods. (Clerk to check once the water resides).**
- d. **Footpaths:** The footbridge at the Recreation Ground, Lower Street side, has been replaced. No other concerns reported.

25/1401

**Correspondence & Matters for Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Agenda.**

- a. **Agenda items, including Members Reports:** To be forwarded to the Clerk before Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.
- Meeting closed at 8.30pm**

**Next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**7.30pm, Village Hall, West Chinnock**