

CHILTON TRINITY PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Chilton Trinity Parish Council was held on Wednesday, 5th November, 2025 in the Village Hall, Chilton Trinity at 7.30 pm.

In attendance: Parish Councillors Mr P Felton (Chairman), Mrs L Hook, Mrs R Felton and Mr D Hobbs together with the **Clerk**, Graham Jarvis. No residents were present.

Public Speaking Time: No topics raised.

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31. Apologies for absence, disclosures of interest and dispensations.

An apology for absence was received from Parish Councillor Mr D Brown (holiday) and was accepted. Somerset Ward Councillors, Mr B Bolt and Mr M Caswell had also given their apologies. Mr Hobbs disclosed a pecuniary interest as a payee of one of the creditors. Dispensations from the Code of Conduct were held by Mr Felton and Mrs Felton regarding support for facilities at Chilton Waters and by Mr Hobbs concerning the River Parrett barrier and associated flood defence works.

32. Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd September 2025 were presented, approved and signed as a true and complete record.

33. Matters Arising: –

- a) **24a - Local Community Network, Dowsborough Group** – The Chairman reported on the meeting held on 17th September. Nether Stowey and Cannington Parish Councils had withdrawn from the Group. Police Community Support Officer, Trevor Phillips, reported on crime statistics for the area. 91 crimes had been reported between June and September, there had been a spate of thefts of Land Rovers and several incidents involving the use of e-scooters in Bridgwater. **Highways Sub-Group** – main discussion related to grit bins – Mr Felton was pleased to mention that all four bins in the Parish had been re-filled by Somerset Council.
- b) **24b - River Parrett Barrier Project** – The Chairman reported that 22 people attended a site visit on 1st October, the project had been well explained and the visual appearance had changed considerably since his previous visit in July. Representatives from the project would be attending the January* Parish Council meeting to provide information about the work scheduled for 2026. **Riverside Park** – 18 residents had attended the drop-in session held in the Village Hall on 10th September. The suggestions made would be processed and further consultation announced in due course. .

* Since revised to 4th March 2026.

34. Planning Matters - None.

35. Village Website.

The village website chiltontrinity.org had been formed ten years ago featuring information about the Parish Church, Village Hall and used to display details about the Parish Council including publication of statutory information. New regulations were being introduced and it was thought to be an appropriate time to review the present arrangements.

The Clerk had spoken to a representative of Parish Online at the recent Somerset Parishes Conference. Parish Online would be able to build a new site compliant with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) and migrate key content from the present site. Each Councillor and the Clerk would each have their own gov.uk email address for Parish Council business. The fee for the first year would be £215.00 plus VAT and £315.00 plus VAT in future years. There was agreement to engage Parish Online on the terms mentioned. Prior to placing the order, the Chairman would contact Mr Peter Savage who had established the present website to thank him for his services. It was also noted that the Clerk would be involved in updating the new site, as this was an extra duty an appropriate addition would be made to his paid working hours which would be determined in due course.

36. Financial Matters.

a) National Association of Local Councils Circular – Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2025/26.

Receipt noted; the clerk confirmed that there was adequate provision in the budget to meet the award.

b) Payment of Creditors.

The following payments were confirmed/approved:-

- i) Mr J Andrews – Re-imbusement Labels for Library - £9.98 (£8.32 + £1.66 VAT) – Paid by Bank Transfer.**
- ii) G Jarvis – Clerk’s salary, expenses etc. £950.40 – Cheque No. 308.**
- iii) HM Revenue and Customs – Employment Related - £199.00 - Cheque No. 309.**
- iv) M K Cook – Tree works and debris clearance - £600.00 – Cheque No. 310.**
- v) D & L Hobbs – grass cutting & assistance with tree works - £1,001.40 (£834.50 + £163.90 VAT) Cheque No. 311.**
- vi) Lloyds Bank Plc – Account Fees (August Invoice) - £4.75 (Deducted direct).**
- vii) Lloyds Bank Plc – Account Fees (September Invoice) - £4.25 (Deducted direct).**
- viii) Lloyds Bank Plc – Account Fees (October Invoice) - £4.25 (Deducted direct).**

(Mr Hobbs having disclosed a pecuniary interest was absent from the room whilst item v) above was considered).

c) Bank Reconciliation Statement – 30th September 2025.

Members viewed the statement prepared by the Clerk together with supporting papers. The statement was agreed as correct and signed.

d) Work Place Pension Regulations

The Clerk referred to the regulations which required employers to contribute and enrol employees in a pension scheme. However, if an employee earned below a specified amount there was duty to offer an appropriate scheme but without an employer contribution. The facility had to be made available to all new employee with existing employees reminded of their option every three years. The current re-enrolment process had to be completed by 6th December 2025 and a Declaration of Compliance made to the Pension Regulator by 6th February 2026. The Parish Council's only employee is the Clerk whose salary is below the threshold for automatic enrolment. When the regulations were introduced, the Clerk did not wish to join a pension scheme and their decision had not changed. There was agreement that the position be noted. (Also refer to Minutes 26d – 7th September 2022, 24c – 3rd July 2019, 68c – 2nd March 2016).

e) Community Infrastructure Funds.

Further to Minute 27c - 5th September 2025; the Chairman reported that he would be visiting Bridgwater Mowers to discuss the options for a motor mower suitable for the Council's needs. Other projects to use the funds available would be discussed at a future meeting.

37. Roads and Footpaths.

a) Annual Hedge Cutting.

Further to Minute 28a - 3rd September 2025; the Chairman reported that a local farmer had been approached but did not wish to be considered for the work. In the circumstance contact had been made with the contractor (Dave Gardner) who had undertaken the task previously and was willing to do so again this year. There was agreement that Dave Gardner be re-engaged, the work being expected to be carried-out later that month.

b) Fallen Branch – 5th September 2025.

The Chairman gave a report on an incident that occurred in the afternoon of 5th September. A branch of an oak tree over-hanging the footpath and fence of the former cricket field unexpectedly broke damaging the wire fence with minor damage to wooden fence adjacent to the road. A local farmer quickly offered to clear the debris from the road and footpath. The Chairman thanked him for the work he had done. The matter was reported to the school who promptly arranged for the wire fence to be repaired.

Another overhanging limb from the same tree was later examined and as a precaution had been cut back. Members also wished to place on record their appreciation to Mr Cook and Mr Hobbs for their swift and professional services. The Council agreed that the action taken by the Chairman was due to an emergency and therefore in this instance it was appropriate for Financial Regulations to be waived. The Clerk mentioned that the Council's insurers had a standard recommendation that mature trees should be surveyed regularly. There was agreement that a report be commissioned on such trees in the Council's ownership.

c) Damaged Sign.

Further to Minute 28b - 3rd September 2025; the Chairman was pleased to report that the speed limit sign by the play area which had been knocked over had been promptly restored by Somerset Highways.

d) Memorial Tree Request.

The Chairman reported that he had been contacted by the son of a former resident (Mandy Hawkins) who had died in 2023. The relative wished for a tree to be planted in memory of his mother alongside the "new" footpath. There was agreement that the Council would accept sponsorship for a tree on similar arrangements to those of a previous request, including the absence of a plaque. (Refer to Minute 67c – 12th March 2025).

38. Arrangements for Parish Council meetings in 2026.

There was agreement that the Parish Council wished to continue to meet in the Village Hall every other month on the first Wednesday. The exception for 2026 would be the January meeting which would be held a week later on the 14th. The Clerk to contact the bookings secretary to see if the desired dates were available.

39. Suggested Topics for Future Meetings – None.

40. Date of next meeting – Wednesday, 14th January 2026 in the Village Hall beginning at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Chairman