

BISHOPS LYDEARD & COTHELSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held in the Village Hall, Bishops Lydeard on Wednesday 15th April 2026.

Present: Cllrs Roberts (Chair), Hunt, Allen, Pattermore, Lewin-Harris, Warmington, Bainbridge, Bletcher and supported by David Richards (Clerk)

Absent: Cllrs Salter, Orr and Rigby.

5 members of the public were present.

Agenda Item 1 – 074/26 Apologies: To receive apologies and to approve reasons for absence.

Cllr Salter sent an apology as he needed to cover a football coaching session again. Cllr Orr sent an apology due to a prior commitment. No apology was received from Cllr Rigby.

The reason for absence was approved for Cllr Orr and not approved for Cllr Salter. No reason for absence was received from Cllr Rigby so it could not be approved.

Agenda Item 2 – 075/26 Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Roberts declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in The Paper Shop and Cllrs Pattermore and Allen a DPI in The Village Hall (Agenda Item 12, Invoice Payments - list 2).

Agenda Item 3 – 076/26 To consider the approval of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2026.

The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by Cllr Lewin-Harris. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and received unanimous support.

Agenda Item 4 – 077/26 Comments from members of the public.

A member of the public said that she is currently exploring the idea of organising a People's Emergency Briefing (PEB) on the nature and climate crisis as part of a national initiative. The PEB will include a screening of a 45-minute film featuring contributors such as Chris Packham, leading scientists, a former general and Jennifer Saunders. This will be followed by time for the audience to reflect on what they have seen and connect with others locally to consider how society could respond. The aim is to help communities come together around a shared understanding of the risks, and to create a welcoming

space for people to engage, especially those who have not previously been involved in climate or nature discussions. She is hoping to hold the event at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall sometime in June (date still to be confirmed).

A member of the public wanted to raise two questions:

1. She noted that there are two items on the agenda relating to the use of CIL funding (the school and woodland). Also, by her calculations the Roads & Traffic project spend is now up to £94,500 without a spade in the ground with at least another £100,000 to get anywhere. How would the council like to respond? She is very concerned about this. The chair said that the clerk will respond in due course.
2. The second concern is the use of public money. She noted that the clerk had recently resigned which is very unfortunate. She is concerned about the money that was spent out such as the Post Office Box at over £400.00 and the computer which she acknowledged will be used in the future. She is also concerned about the overtime and whether that was agreed in advance. She also noted that it included holiday pay. It was noted that the council will vote on this later. The chair stated that payments were in accordance with the clerk's contract of employment.

A member of the public wanted to know why this meeting was delayed by a week. The chair explained that it was due to the impact of the Easter holidays which meant that insufficient days had been allowed when posting the agenda and papers. It was a procedural issue.

Agenda Item 5 – 078/26 Recruitment of a new Clerk to the Parish Council.

Cllr Allen explained that Martin Elford had resigned with one weeks' notice in accordance with his contract. David Richards will resume as clerk again in addition to his role as Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). The council will need to recruit another clerk. After some discussion Cllr Allen proposed that the Staffing Committee is given authority to coordinate the recruitment and selection process as usual and will come back to the council for any decisions. This was seconded by Cllr Pattermore and received unanimous support.

Agenda Item 6 – 079/26 Review and Approval of the CIL fund request of £50,000 from Bishops Lydeard Church School/Nursery.

The clerk explained that the school has requested another £50,000 as the Department of Education application had been unsuccessful. This money will be needed for fit out towards the end of the build. Cllr Bletcher said that the way he read it is that if we didn't come up with the £50,000 there is an alternative way of funding it. The clerk stated that the school would go into deficit which is not ideal.

Cllr Lewin-Harris said that from memory there isn't enough money in the CIL funds to do this if we keep the money allocated to the traffic calming project. The clerk confirmed this and predicted a deficit. Cllr Lewin-Harris said that she thinks we should keep the money allocated to traffic calming until we know more from Somerset Council.

Cllr Bainbridge spoke strongly in favour of providing the funds to the school.

Cllr Hunt suggested that a loan could be provided which could be paid back when the school nursery is in profit. However, it is understood that the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust are a charity and this would not be feasible.

Cllr Allen said it would be nice to do this if we had the freedom to do it and supports Cllr Lewin-Harris in this one as there are other important things in the village besides the children and we are a very mixed community. There are a large number of older people in the village and things like the crossing by the surgery would be important. He also noted that the crossing by the football ground is largely to assist the children crossing there. He also noted that last month we refused a grant to a private nursery. He also understands that there are some schools amalgamating or closing with the number of pupils reducing.

Cllr Roberts said that we could look at this again when we have a better idea of what is going to be left of the CIL money.

After further discussion Cllr Lewin-Harris proposed that at this moment we cannot do this, but we will look at this later when we have a better idea of how the Roads and Traffic project is going. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and received unanimous support.

Agenda Item 7 – 080/26 Approval of the quotation for Public Convenience Cistern replacements at a cost of £1,381 per unit.

The clerk explained the urgent need to replace the aging toilet plumbing systems. He also explained that the new systems will reduce the water usage and therefore the water bills. He also confirmed that reserved funds are available for this. After some discussion, Cllr Lewin-Harris proposed that the quotation from Healthmatic is approved. This was seconded by Cllr Pattemore and received unanimous support.

Agenda Item 8 – 081/26 Approval for manual removal of weeds along the roadsides in the village.

Cllr Roberts explained that there are two options for removal of weeds. One using glyphosate, an effective weed killer, and another being manual removal. It was noted that a lot of people feel strongly against using glyphosate. The two quotes for manual removal of weeds were considered. It was noted that a third quotation will be required as the cost is above £3,000 in accordance with the council's Financial Regulations.

Cllr Bletcher said that if we only go for manual removal the weeds will quickly grow back again. As a side issue to this we have a working group looking at what the lengthsman does and thought that this is fundamental to that. Perhaps this should be considered by the working group looking at the Lengthsman's schedule. However, the terms of reference of the working group would need to be changed.

Cllr Bainbridge spoke strongly against this proposal.

After some further discussion it was agreed to address the weeds impacting the MUGA as highlighted by Cllr Lewin-Harris. This can be added to a further agenda for approval when the costs and method are known.

Action: The clerk is to obtain at least two quotes for the removed of weeds from the MUGA. Where weed killers are proposed then a method statement, risk assessment, time of day proposed etc. will be required.

Agenda Item 9 – 082/26 Approval of the refurbishment of the Darby Way Phone Box.

The three quotations provided were reviewed. Cllr Pattemore proposed that the quotation from Mr Phillips for £1,470 is approved. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt and received unanimous support.

Agenda Item 10 – 083/26 Planning Applications.

The following planning application was noted:

Case Ref: 06/26/0010/T Proposal: Application to fell (down to 3 metres in height) one beech tree included in Taunton Deane Borough (Bishops Lydeard No.1) Tree Preservation Order 1977 at The Old Vicarage, Bishops Lydeard (TD90)

Agenda Item 11 – 0084/26 Authorisation of Clerk's pay and expenses for April 2026 (papers).

Cllr Allen proposed that the clerk's pay for April 2026 (£465.98 overtime, plus £7.35 Employer NI) and expenses for April 2026 (£485.79) and the RFO's pay for April 2026 (£392.70 plus £499.80 overtime plus £71.33 Employer NI) and expenses for April 2026 (£10) is approved. This was seconded by Cllr Pattemore and approved by all.

Agenda Item 12 – 085/26 Finance.

12a – February and March 2026 Bank Reconciliation and Cashbook reports

The Bank Reconciliation reports and Cashbook reports were noted.

1b – Scribe Summary Report (actual Vs budget)

The Scribe Summary Report for 01/04/2025 to 31/03/2026 was noted.

12c - Approval to transfer £150,000 from the CCLA bank account to the Unity Trust Bank account - This agenda item was considered after Agenda item 23 (see below).

PAYMENTS:

Cllr Hunt proposed that the invoices listed below were approved for payment. This was seconded by Cllr Warmington. There was a majority vote in favour and the list was approved for payment.

List 1						
From:	Number:	Date:	For:	£ Excl. VAT	£ Inc VAT	
Water 2 Business	6070025482	02/03/2026	Water Rates - Library	£138.04	£138.04	
Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance	N/A	16/03/2026	Grant	£250.00	£250.00	
Kings Church Quantock Trust	17-Mar-26	17/03/2026	Youth Sports Equipment	£632.93	£632.93	
Healthmatic	15307	13/03/2026	Public Convenience Doors	£3,800.00	£4,560.00	
CASA Environment Services	INV-33132	19/03/2026	Legionella Risk Assessments	£485.00	£582.00	
Somerset Council	32016282	19/03/2026	Bins and Grass Cutting for Q4	£1,015.06	£1,218.07	
Mr C Back , C/O Hannah Cook	Q1 2026/27	01/04/2026	Library Lease - Q1 2026/27	£800.00	£800.00	
Somerset Council	N1308282000	12/03/2026	Library Non-Domestic Rates	£2,740.00	£2,740.00	
Somerset Council	32016780	27/03/2026	Detailed Design for Site 14	£16,996.00	£16,996.00	
Somerset Council	32016783	27/03/2026	Feasibility Study - Sites 3, 4 and 9	£25,734.00	£25,734.00	
SALC	2786	30/03/2026	Training with Breakthrough Comms	£40.00	£40.00	
Fairy Dust Cleaning	0326	30/03/2026	Cleaning the Library	£153.00	£153.00	
Fairy Dust Cleaning	0326	30/03/2026	Cleaning the toilets	£570.63	£570.63	
A K Raucki and Sons Ltd	SI-1588	31/03/2026	Library Water Heater	£135.00	£162.00	
Jacks Garden Mtce	2464	31/03/2026	Lengthsman - February 2026	£924.95	£1,109.94	
Jacks Garden Mtce	2465	31/03/2026	Lengthsman - March 2026	£920.40	£1,104.48	
St Marys Church	N/A	01/04/2026	Church Centre Hire for 20 May 2026	£24.00	£24.00	

Cllrs Roberts, Allen and Pattermore left the meeting at this point due to their declaration of interests.

Cllr Lewin-Harris proposed that the invoice in List 2 was approved for payment. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and approved by all.

List 2						
From:	Number:	Date:	For:	£ Excl. VAT	£ Inc VAT	
The Paper Shop	1047-260328	28/03/2026	Newspapers for the Library	£16.72	£16.72	
Village Hall	1047	19/03/2026	MUGA and Car Park Lease	£175.00	£175.00	

Cllrs Roberts, Allen and Pattermore returned to the room.

The **Direct Debits** listed below were noted:

Direct Debits						
From:	Number:	Date:	For:	£ Excl. VAT	£ Inc VAT	
EDF	000027153359	04/03/2026	Library Electricity	£137.53	£144.41	
British Gas	8120011485	31/03/2026	Public Conveniences Electricity	£45.95	£48.24	

The **Bank Charges** below were noted:

Bank Charges						
From:	Number:	Date:	For:	£ Excl. VAT	£ Inc VAT	
Unity Trust Bank		31/03/2026	Bank charges	£9.55	£9.55	
Unity Trust Bank		31/03/2026	Bank charges	£1.50	£1.50	

The **Receipts** listed below were noted:

Income						
From:	Number:	Date:	For:	£ Excl. VAT	£ Inc VAT	
CCLA Bank	N/A	04/04/2026	Interest Payment	£1,556.46	£1,556.46	
Library Cash	BLDLIB_Banking_01.04.202	01/04/2026	Library cash	£100.25	£100.25	
Local Businesses	N/A	31/03/2026	Flower Box Donations	£290.00	£290.00	

Agenda Item 13 – 86/26 Maintenance of village flower beds – Volunteers needed.

Cllr Lewin-Harris explained that the Mrs Durrant used to coordinate the rota for maintenance of the village flower beds but has now moved away. Mrs Davenport now coordinates the rotas and now needs new recruits. It was agreed to support this request.

Action: Clerk to make some posters and add to the noticeboards and website.

Agenda Item 14 – 087/26 Library Quarterly Review update.

It was agreed to defer this item until next month when the report and statistics from the meeting with Somerset Council will be available

Agenda Item 15 – 088/26 Correspondence List.

The clerk provided updates on the correspondence listed in the paper provided.

Cllr Bletcher provided an update on the Microsoft Team meeting held between Somerset Council and the Roads & Traffic working group regarding Sites 3 and 9 as a result of the email received on 26th March 2026 which had been circulated to all of the councillors. The working group were able to answer the questions raised by Somerset Council and Somerset Council will proceed to work on the Feasibility Reports for Sites 3, 4 and 9 as planned.

The clerk noted that the lengthsman is now trading as a limited company with a new email address and bank account.

Cllr Warmington asked about the email received from Somerset Council regarding Assets of Community Value. It was confirmed in the meeting that the letter states that The Bird in Hand, Bishops Lydeard and the Lethbridge Arms, Bishops Lydeard on the Register of Assets of Community Value expired as of 12 March 2026 and in line with the legislation, they have been removed from the register.

Action: The clerk is to follow up and see if they can be re-registered and check if there are any other assets registered.

Agenda Item 16 – 089/026 Somerset Council Matters.

The report was noted. Unfortunately, Cllr Rigby was not in attendance to provide further information.

Agenda Item 17 – 090/026 Lengthman's monthly report.

Lengthman's monthly report was reviewed and noted.

Agenda Item 18 – 091/026 Avon & Somerset Police Report.

No PCSO report was available this month.

Agenda Item 19 – 092/26 Clerks Report and action tracker.

The report and action tracker were noted.

Agenda Item 20 – 093/25 To note planning permissions granted or refused.

The following planning permissions were noted:

Application number : 06/20/0063: Conversion of cottage into 2 No. dwellings with erection of first floor extension over garage and replacement of porch at The Mews, Dene Road, Bishops Lydeard as amended by agents email of 25th March 2021 and Drg No.s 05 Rev C and 06 Rev C. **Decision of Finally Disposed Of** was made on 30/03/2026.

Application number : 06/26/0002/T: Application to carry out crown-reduction works to two oak trees and one eucalyptus tree included in Taunton Deane Borough (Bishops Lydeard No.2) Tree Preservation Order 1991 at Dunkirk Memorial House, Minehead Road, Bishops Lydeard (TD527). **Decision of Conditional Approval** was made on 03/03/2026.

Application number : 06/26/0003/T: Application to fell one young Tulip Tree (T69) and to carry out management works to two beech trees (crown reduce by 7 to 8 metres height (T48) and crown-reduce by 2 to 2.5 metres (T64) included in Taunton Deane Borough (Bishops Lydeard No.2) Tree Preservation Order 1997 at Sandhill Park, Bishops Lydeard (TD705). **Decision of Conditional Approval** was made on 13/03/2026.

Agenda Item 21 – 094/26 To note planning applications withdrawn – None.

Agenda Item 22 – 095/26 Any Other Business for report only.

Cllr Hunt provided an update on the planned holiday club at the local school. She said unfortunately SASP did not have anyone to run it this year.

The Council resolved to enter confidential session and exclude the press and public at this point due to the item below being confidential due to the consideration of the purchase of an asset.

Agenda Item 23 – 096/26 Final Approval for the purchase and completion of Sandhill Park Woodland.

After some discussion Cllr Bainbridge proposed that the purchase of the woodland should now be completed. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt and received majority support.

Action: The clerk is to instruct the solicitor (Porter Dodson) to complete the purchase of the woodland.

Agenda Item 12c - 097/26 Approval to transfer £150,000 from the CCLA bank account to the Unity Trust Bank account.

Cllr Bainbridge proposed that the transfer of £150,000 from the CCLA bank account to the Unity Trust Bank account is completed. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt and received majority support.

Action: The Clerk/ RFO is to complete the transfer forms and obtain the necessary signatures for the transfer of £150,000 from the CCLA bank account to the Unity Trust Bank account.

Agenda Item 24 – 098/26 Date of the next meetings:

Annual Meeting of the Council on Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7pm at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall (new small hall).

Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 6pm at the Church Centre in St Mary's Church Bishops Lydeard.

The meeting closed at 21:00

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