

Parish Council Report – May 2026

The Annual Meeting of the Council was held on 13th May 2026. It is a Statutory requirement to hold an annual meeting of the council, and the meeting must be held every year during May. In an election year, it must be held within 14 days of the new councillors taking office.

The first item of business is the election of the chair for the civic year – once elected the chair must sign a declaration of acceptance of office for that special role. Alison Roberts was duly elected as chair.

Also included were the election of a vice chair (Miles Orr elected), appointment of committees, a review of existing council policies, meetings schedule, etc.

Business this month included approving expenditure on various items plus the approval of a grant for the Russet Cider Trail. The purpose of the Russet Cider Trail charity is to provide a safe cycle/pathway between Bishops Lydeard, Cotford St Luke and Norton Fitzwarren, enabling a route into Taunton. This is a Community Project, and the trail will, wherever possible, follow the route of the West Somerset Railway, away from major traffic and within a natural environment. It has seven Trustees and two volunteers who all live locally.

Planning applications were reviewed including the cases Ref: 06/25/0001 and 06/25/0002 for the new Co-op store and nine houses on Taunton Road, Bishops Lydeard. Full details of these applications and others can be found at:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/Planning-West-Apps>

The Annual Meeting of the Parish will be held on 20th May 2026. This annual meeting must be held between 1st March and 1st June (inclusive). It is not a council meeting but convened by the council on behalf of the parish so it can discuss “parish affairs”.

Everyone present can vote if they are an elector of the parish, though no vote is binding on the council (including parish polls). The Chair of council (Councillor Roberts) will preside. There is no prescribed format in law for this meeting. We have invited guests to speak about various topics this year including:

- An introduction to the new PCSO Sean Johnson.
- A presentation from Fiona Underwood (a consultant focussed on the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment) regarding the People’s Emergency Briefing.
- A presentation from Fiona Jackson – Wilder Environment.
- An update from James Dakin regarding the renovation of the Old School House to create an expanded nursery.
- And last but not least the Chair’s report.

I am sure it will be an interesting and lively meeting with the benefit of tea and biscuits!

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<http://www.bishopslydeardparishcouncil.gov.uk>