ADOPTED

BISHOPS LYDEARD & COTHELSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Bishops Lydeard on Wednesday 14 October 2026 v2

Present: Cllrs Roberts (Chair), Allen, Pattemore, Bletcher, Hunt and Partington, supported by David Richards (RFO) and Alison Dunphy (Clerk).

Cllr Partington arrived at 19:01.

Absent: Cllrs Bainbridge, Lewin-Harris, Warmington, Rigby and Orr.

There were two members of the public present.

Agenda Item 1 – 216/26 – Apologies: To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence

Cllrs Bainbridge, Lewin Harris and Warmington submitted apologies due being on holiday.

Cllrs Orr and Rigby submitted apologies due to business commitments.

These apologies were accepted.

Agenda Item 2 – 217/26 – Co-option/ election of Paul Partington as Councillor

Paul Partington stood and was duly elected Parish Councillor for the Parish without contest at the election in October 2026.

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Members' Interests forms were duly signed and witnessed and passed to the RFO for submission.

Agenda Item 3 – 218/26 – Declarations of Interest

Cllr Roberts declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in The Paper Shop.

Agenda Item 4 – 219/26 – To consider approval of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2026

Cllr Allen proposed that the minutes be approved as an accurate record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 – 220/26 – Comments from members of the public

Three members of the public attended the meeting.

One member of the public raised concerns regarding the dangerous and unlawful use of e-scooters. The Parish Council has since updated its website to make it easier for residents to report incidents directly to the police via a link on the News page.

Agenda Item 6 – 221/26 – Report on School Nursery Refurbishment – James Dakin

In the absence of Mr Dakin, the Clerk presented a report provided by him giving an update on progress at the new nursery. The report included a written overview together with photographs of the refurbished interior.

The report is available on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Pattemore asked about attendance. Cllr Hunt commented that there was a waiting list for two-year-olds.

The Clerk reported that Mr Dakin was exploring the different Ofsted requirements applicable to this age group to ensure that the nursery can operate at full capacity.

Agenda Item 7 – 222/26 – Approval of a grant for the School Crossing (£1,000) and burial grants for St Mary's Church, Bishops Lydeard (£400) and Cothelstone Church (£200)

Cllr Allen proposed approval of the grants. This was seconded by Cllr Pattemore and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 8 – 223/26 – Review and approve estimates for initial works at Sandhill Park Woodland

Cllr Hunt outlined the scope of the proposed initial and additional works at Sandhill Park Woodland.

Councillors reviewed three quotations from local businesses and selected Ford Trees as the preferred contractor.

Cllr Bletcher proposed approval. This was seconded by Cllr Partington and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 9 – 224/26 – Review and agree a response to the Draft Somerset Heritage at Risk Register

The Clerk will provide photographic evidence of the pointing works undertaken in Cothelstone and request that the relevant entry be removed from the register.

Action: The clerk to contact Somerset Heritage with the Risk Register updates.

Agenda Item 10 – 225/26 – Review and approve the Vexatious Complaints Policy

Councillors reviewed the updated policy.

Cllr Hunt proposed approval of the policy. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 11 – 226/26 – Planning Applications

The following planning applications were reviewed:

Case Ref: 06/26/0021
Proposal: Erection of a single-storey extension to the rear of Croft House, Cothelstone Road, Bishops Lydeard.
Application Type: Full Planning Permission.
Response: No Comment.

The following planning application was for notification only:

Case Ref: 06/26/0024/T
Proposal: Notification to carry out management works to one Turkey Oak tree, two Holm Oak trees, one cedar and one beech within Ash Priors Conservation Area at The Priory, Combe Florey Road, Ash Priors.
Application Type: Works to Tree(s) in Conservation Area.

David Richards (RFO) advised that a further planning application had been received after the agenda for the meeting on 14 October 2026 had been formally approved and published and, therefore, could not be considered at this meeting.

Cllr Hunt advised that an extension to the consultation deadline could not be relied upon and that an extraordinary meeting may therefore be required should councillors wish to make a formal response before the consultation deadline.

Agenda Item 12 – 227/26 – Authorisation of Clerk's and RFO's pay and expenses for October 2026

Cllr Allen explained that the annual Local Government pay award had been set at an increase of 3.3% and that this increase had been reflected in the October pay figures for both the RFO and the Clerk.

Cllr Allen proposed approval of the following payments:

- Clerk's salary: **£1,030.20**
- Employer's National Insurance relating to the Clerk: **£91.98**
- Clerk's employer pension contribution: **£30.91**
- RFO's salary: **£516.32**
- RFO's 2026/27 annual pay award: **£313.88**
- Employer's National Insurance: **£61.98**
- RFO expenses for October 2026: **£28.55**

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Pattemore and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 13 – 228/26 – Finance

The following Finance papers were reviewed:

13a – September 2026 Bank Reconciliation and Cashbook reports.

The bank reconciliation and cashbook reports were reviewed and noted.

13b – Scribe Summary Report.

The summary report was reviewed and noted with no major variances from budget other than the £50,000 school grant previously reported.

13c – Reserves Report Review.

The Reserves report was reviewed and noted. The RFO explained that the General Reserves are on track to be between 6 months and 12 months precept by the end of the financial year.

PAYMENTS:

The approval of the payments in List 1 was proposed by Cllr Hunt. This was seconded by Cllr Bletcher and received unanimous support. Therefore, the invoices in **List 1** below were approved for payment.

List 1					
From:	**Number:**	**Date:**	**For:**	**£ Excl. VAT**	**£ Inc VAT**
SPFA	INV-17063	04/09/2026	MUGA and Playground Inspaction	£140.00	£140.00
Pete Miller Electrical Ltd	INV-1909	17/09/2026	Double socket for CCTV system	£92.20	£110.64
St Mary's Church	N/A	17/09/2026	Burial Ground Grant	£400.00	£400.00
Cothelstone Church	N/A	18/09/2026	Burial Ground Grant	£200.00	£200.00
Scribe	INV-22372	22/09/2026	Scribe Accounts renewal	£612.00	£734.00
Somerset Council	32033873	23/09/2026	Bins and grass cutting	£797.41	£956.89
Coombers Security	263614	28/09/2026	CCTV system for Public Convenience	£1,165.00	£1,398.00
Coombers Security	263857	06/10/2026	Call out - Replaced control panel ba	£114.00	£136.80
Coombers Security	264092	06/10/2026	Intruder Alert - Monitoring & Mainte	£275.00	£330.00
SALC	3423	05/10/2026	Councillor Training - Cllr Hunt	£25.00	£25.00
Fairy Dust Cleaning	0926	30/09/2026	Cleaning the Library	£137.00	£137.00
Fairy Dust Cleaning	0926	30/09/2026	Cleaning the toilets	£631.68	£631.68

The invoices in **List 2** below were noted.

List 2					
From:	**Number:**	**Date:**	**For:**	**£ Excl. VAT**	**£ Inc VAT**
The Paper Shop	1047-260912	12/09/2026	Newpapers for the Library	£5.52	£5.52

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

Direct Debits					
From:	**Number:**	**Date:**	**For:**	**£ Excl. VAT**	**£ Inc VAT**
EDF	000029604352	07/09/2026	Library Electricity	£72.77	£76.41
Bristish Gas	Invoice-802742522	30/09/2026	Public Conveniences Electricity	£42.68	£44.81
Biffa	308C125045	25/09/2026	Waste Transfer Notes	£8.45	£10.14

The **Bank Charges** below were noted:

Bank Charges					
From:	**Number:**	**Date:**	**For:**	**£ Excl. VAT**	**£ Inc VAT**
Unity Trust Bank		30/09/2026	Bank charges	£9.85	£9.85
Unity Trust Bank		30/09/2026	Bank charges	£2.80	£2.80

The **Receipts** listed below were noted:

Income					
From:	**Number:**	**Date:**	**For:**	**£ Excl. VAT**	**£ Inc VAT**
Somerset Council		08/09/2026	Precept (50%)	£42,100.00	£42,100.00
CCLA Bank	1-20261005195517	02/09/2026	Interest Payment	£1,136.43	£1,136.43
Library Cash	ng_02.10.2026_RH	02/10/2026	Library cash	£136.25	£136.25

Agenda Item 14 – 229/26 – Interim AGAR Section 3 External Auditor Report for 2025/26 – RFO

The RFO explained that the External Auditor provided an Interim Report only. This has been uploaded to the website. A Final Report and Certificate are dependent on their review work on the AGAR and supporting documentation as a result of correspondence received in relation to 2025/26 and/or prior years.

Agenda Item 15 – 230/26 – Somerset Playing Fields Association – MUGA Inspection Report

The MUGA Inspection Report was reviewed by councillors. Copies of the report have also been provided to the Village Hall Committee and the MUGA Committee.

The report identified one item in the village hall play area as **Red/Urgent**, with the following action required:

Immediately remove the seat and chains until replacement parts can be fitted.
Ensure that, at all times, there is a minimum clearance of 400 mm between any non-flexible part of the seat, in its most onerous position, and the ground.

This will be considered by the village hall committee.

The MUGA Committee, chaired by Martin Rant & Secretary Cllr Lewin-Harris, will meet on Wednesday 4 November 2026 and review the MUGA issues identified

Agenda Item 16 – 231/26 – Roads & Traffic Working Group meeting with Somerset Council on 18 September 2026 – Update from Clerk/RFO

The RFO explained that Somerset Council had provided a draft legal contract containing an indemnity provision which would financially indemnify Somerset Council both now and in the future.

Councillors agreed that the proposed arrangement was unacceptable, particularly as arrangements with other parish councils differ from those being proposed for Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone.

Cllr Bletcher updated councillors on progress being made with Bishops Lydeard Football Club and stated that, if matters proceed without issue, the works will take place in February 2027. This would provide the Football Club with sufficient time to reschedule any affected fixtures.

It was suggested that Cllr Rigby and/or Rachel Gilmour MP may be able to assist. Cllr Roberts will follow up with Rachel Gilmour MP regarding this matter and the devolution of land.

Agenda Item 17 – 232/26 – Speeding on High Street/Cothelstone Road – Update from Cllr Roberts

Cllr Roberts updated councillors on a recent meeting with the PCSO regarding speeding on Cothelstone Road.

The PCSO advised that Community Speed Watch was not possible at Delta Rise for safety reasons, but that Darby Way was being reviewed as a possible alternative location.

The PCSO also recommended increasing the number of 20 mph signs and introducing additional road markings to make drivers more aware of the speed limit.

Somerset Highways has stated that the pedestrian walkway between Pound Lane and Glandfield Close is poorly lit and unsafe.

The Clerk will follow up with Highways regarding this matter and potential additional locations for Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) within the village.

Cllr Roberts advised that the PCSO would be attending a Beat Surgery on 15 October.

Action: The clerk is to contact Somerset Highways with the recommendations from the PCSO.

Agenda Item 18 – 233/26 – Correspondence List – Clerk

The Clerk provided updates on the correspondence listed in the paper circulated to councillors.

1. Anti-social behaviour at Hithermead Bridge and ongoing issues at Little Meadow grass area and the Back Stream path

An email had been received from a member of the public raising concerns that some children were behaving disrespectfully.

The PCSO visited the site and determined that the children were not acting unlawfully.

The PCSO advised the children that, should an adult behave aggressively towards them, they should report the matter to the police.

The PCSO also advised that any concerns regarding inappropriate or concerning filming or photography of children should be reported to the police for assessment.

The Clerk has asked Mr Dakin at Bishops Lydeard Primary School whether the subject of **Respect** could be discussed during an assembly.

The existing "Please Dismount" sign has disappeared. It was agreed that the sign would be replaced following a period of calm.

Action: The clerk/ RFO to arrange for a new 'cyclists please dismount sign' for the Streamside Footpath.

2. Fallen tree on Whisky Trail

A photograph of the tree was shown to councillors.

The tree is the responsibility of the landowner. Cllr Pattemore will establish who owns the land.

Should the landowner subsequently decline to take appropriate action, the Parish Council will consider what further steps may be required.

Action: The clerk to contact the landowner of the fallen tree on the Whisky Trail and request that it is removed.

3. Vehicle reported as abandoned, waste bin issue and e-scooters

The black vehicle reported as abandoned near the underpass is currently taxed and has a valid Tax and MOT. The PCSO has confirmed that it is not parked illegally.

The MOT will expire on 18 November 2026 and the Tax on 01 May 2027.

Action: The clerk to report the vehicle to Somerset Highways as soon as the MOT expires in November 2026.

4. **E-scooters** had been discussed earlier in the meeting under Agenda Item 5.

Agenda Item 19 – 234/26 – Somerset Council Matters – Cllr Rigby

No report was received.

The report will be circulated when available.

Agenda Item 20 – 235/26 – Avon & Somerset Police Report

The Parish Council currently receives a police report covering Taunton rather than one specifically relating to Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone. The October 2026 report was reviewed.

The report is uploaded to the Parish Council website under **Reports**.

Agenda Item 21 – 236/26 – Clerk's Report and Action Tracker

Items discussed from the clerk's report and the Action Tracker included:

- One week's holiday – RFO
- Minutes
- ICO
- Roads and Traffic
- Graffiti on Darby Way Bus Shelter – Clerk to follow up
- Scribe Fest

Agenda Item 22 – 237/26 – To note planning permissions granted or refused

The following planning permissions were noted:

Application Number: 06/26/0017
Conversion of garage outbuilding into annexe at 6A Taunton Road, Bishops Lydeard.
Decision: Conditional Approval, dated 15 September 2026.

Application Number: 06/26/0020/T
Notification to carry out management works (thinning and crown reduction) to one magnolia tree and one 'contorted' hazel tree within Bishops Lydeard Conservation Area at Church House, 6 West Street, Bishops Lydeard.
Decision: No Objection – Trees, dated 28 September 2026.

Agenda Item 23 – 238/26 – To note planning applications withdrawn

None.

Agenda Item 24 – 239/26 – Any Other Business for report only

The Clerk requested approval to purchase a Clerk's Manual at a cost of **£34.80**. This was approved.

Cllr Hunt requested that Cllr Roberts follow up on the repainting of the telephone box in Darby Way.

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 11 November 2026 at 7.00pm at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall (New Small Hall).**

The meeting closed at 20:17.

Alison Dunphy Date: 20/10/2026

Clerk to the Council

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