

Minutes of the Works Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 15th October 2025 at 6.00 p.m. at the Parish Centre, Gerald's Way
in accordance with notice given

In the Chair: Cllr Samaroo

Present: Cllrs Gardiner, Golding, Oakley, D Taylor and L Taylor, Woodfine

In attendance: Clerk, Chris Attwood

Cllr Samaroo welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded members to follow meeting protocol by raising their hand when wishing to speak and waiting for the Chair to acknowledge them before doing so.

W.01.10.25 Apologies – Cllrs Funnell and Humberstone

W.02.10.25 Declarations of interest – None

W.03.10.25 Public participation – None

W.04.10.25 Minutes of last meeting – Cllr Oakley proposed “**acceptance of the minutes of 9th September 2025**” This was seconded by Cllr D Taylor. There was one abstention.

W.05.10.25 Clerk's Report - There were two updates:

The Clerk advised that the glass panels on the France Lynch noticeboard had been smashed. The Groundsman removed all glass fragments and made the area safe. Members decided that given the proximity of another noticeboard nearby, this one can be removed for now. However, as it is a good-quality noticeboard, there is an intention to replace the panels with polycarbonate in the next financial year.

W.06.10.25 Correspondence –

Meadow Way - ChalCAN advised that Frithwood Surgery are happy for them to plant a Rowan tree to replace the apple tree that had failed. During this communication, the surgery raised concerns about the two large Maple trees that overhang the property. Chris Attwood viewed the trees and recommended that we seek advice from our tree surgeon. The Clerk had spoken to our tree surgeon, who was by chance in the area earlier today and was able to inspect the trees. He has advised that the trees require a crown reduction and general tidy-up. This matter will be brought to the November agenda for discussion once a formal quote and written recommendation have been received. The Clerk also noted that both Maple trees should be added to the Tree Management Policy. **ACTION: Clerk**

A resident contacted the Clerk to request that our tree surgeon looks at a large Oak tree which is overhanging the path running parallel to Frithwood; the tree also overhangs the resident's garden, and she is concerned that the limb is high and heavy. The Clerk contacted our tree surgeon and while he was looking at the trees on Meadow Way he was able to take a look. He advised that the limb is safe and does not require any action at this time. Cllr Oakley noted that the general guidance is that residents are entitled to cut back vegetation to their boundary. The Clerk confirmed that she had already informed the resident of this and will reiterate it when providing the update about the tree surgeon's assessment. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.07.10.25 Works Budget – The RFO provided a report. The Clerk confirmed that the Committee's finances were in order except for the trees budget. This will be discussed in more detail under agenda item 12. Cllr Samaroo asked how much the new lawn mower was going to cost, Chris

Attwood confirmed that it will be approximately £1000.00. Cllr Oakley noted that the Hijet is using less fuel. Chris Attwood confirmed that the tractor has also been used less this year due to the dry weather, resulting in overall fuel usage being lower than normal.

W.08.10.25 ChalCAN Tree Planting Proposal - The Committee discussed the planting proposal and while they were not opposed to the idea in principle, there were some questions regarding the species selected for planting. Cllr Woodfine suggested that in order to support a more efficient process, the Clerk send all planting proposals to himself and Cllr Oakley for review prior to bringing them to Committee; members supported this. Cllr Woodfine kindly volunteered to meet with a member of ChalCAN to review the proposal in more detail with the aim is to ensure that the planting plan maximises biodiversity in the area while maintaining a suitable balance with neighbouring properties. It was also agreed that a public consultation with neighbouring residents is essential before any final decision is made. If these steps can be completed in the coming weeks, the proposal will be brought back to the November Committee meeting for further consideration. The Clerk will arrange for Cllr Woodfine to meet with a member of ChalCAN. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.09.10.25 Charity Land Hire Charges – Cllr Woodfine drafted a document on charity land hire charges, circulated prior to the meeting for members' consideration. He explained that its purpose is to provide Clerks with a framework to manage straightforward requests without referring each one to Committee. Cllr L Taylor raised concerns about charging the football club for use of the Bussage Pleasure Ground pitch, and Chalford Band for the band hut. Cllr D Taylor questioned the fairness of individuals being charged while larger events such as Chalfest are not. Cllr Woodfine clarified that under the guidance, smaller groups like the football club would not be charged, and that Chalfest would still require a bespoke agreement. The Clerk clarified that the three-year agreement with Chalfest has now expired, and discussions on future arrangements and financial contributions will commence later this year. The band hut rent is due to be reviewed next year. Cllr Gardiner commented that Chalfest should contribute to the community, given the disruption it can cause to some residents. Cllr Samaroo agreed and confirmed this will be raised with the organiser. Cllr Woodfine suggested the document be titled *"Exceptional Use of Chalford Pleasure Grounds and Related Fair Charging Guidance"*. Cllr Oakley thanked Cllr Woodfine for the draft and suggested adding "or commercial benefit" to the second sentence under Key Considerations, as well as including an example in the User column of the table on the second page. Following discussion, Cllr Woodfine proposed **"subject to the suggested amendments, we approve the guidance document relating to charity land hire charges"** This was seconded by Cllr Oakley. There was one abstention and one objection.

W.10.10.25 Trees – a) Tree Management Policy. The Clerk updated the Tree management Policy to reflect the amendments agreed at the September meeting. Cllr Woodfine made a further suggestion to no 6. 'Maintaining and Enhancing tree Cover' which was to add *"including mature tree stock; there is a presumption in favour of planting native trees"* all members agreed. Subject to this amendment, Cllr Woodfine proposed **"we approve the updated Tree management Policy"** This was seconded by Cllr Golding and unanimously agreed. **ACTION: Clerk**

b) Lime Tree Management France Lynch Pleasure Ground - As requested, the Clerk obtained three quotes for a visual tree inspection of the Lime tree in FLPG, with the option of a tomography (PiCUS test) if deemed necessary. The quotes were circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration. The Clerk confirmed that each company is certified by the Arboricultural Association and holds the relevant qualification to carry out the work. All consultants advised that a PiCUS test would only be necessary if the visual tree assessment revealed evidence warranting further investigation. While there were some differences in pricing, Cllr Woodfine felt that one of the quotes was more comprehensive and more clearly explained; Cllr Gardiner agreed. Cllr L Taylor felt that the overhanging branches from the Lime tree, which extend over a resident's property, should be cut back. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's tree surgeon has recommended this work and advised that the tree be reduced by at least 50%. Cllr D Taylor raised concern that seeking a second opinion could be seen as a lack of trust in the Council's tree surgeon, who had already inspected the

tree and provided a professional recommendation. The Clerk clarified that she had spoken with the tree surgeon, who fully understood the Council's decision to obtain a second opinion. Cllr Woodfine proposed **"we go ahead with the quote from Bartlett Consulting to carry out a level 2 Visual Tree Assessment and an ISA Risk Assessment. Following this, if we are advised that a picus is necessary we should proceed with this"** This was seconded by Cllr Golding. There were two abstentions. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.11.10.25 Bus Shelter Refurbishments – As agreed at the September meeting, the Clerk obtained three quotes for both the cleaning of three bus shelters and the replacement of the polycarbonate panels. One of the quotes received for cleaning fell within the current budget of £500.00 allowing all three shelters to be professionally cleaned for £240. The Clerk noted that the replacement polycarbonate panels is significantly more expensive and will likely need to be deferred until the new financial year, unless grant funding can be secured in the meantime; one grant has been applied for. The Clerk also obtained a quote for Polyguard, a polycarbonate product coated with an anti-vandal glaze. Samples were received and tested by the Groundsman, who applied graffiti and successfully removed it using a graffiti remover. Although the initial results are positive, it would be prudent to continue to test over a longer period. Members agreed that the polycarbonate panels need to be replaced, but as there is currently no budget for this it was agreed to defer this part of the refurbishment until the new financial year. Following a fairly lengthy discussion, Cllr Woodfine proposed **"we proceed with the cleaning of the three bus shelters at a cost of £240 as quoted by Coreclean and revisit the replacement of the polycarbonate panels in the new financial year"** This was seconded by Cllr Samaroo. There was one abstention. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.12.10.25 Precept – Cllr Samaroo noted that discussions regarding the budget had commenced at last month's meeting and clarified that the 26/27 precept request must be finalised in order for the RFO to present it to the Finance & Management Committee at their October meeting. Members agreed that individual budgets could be rounded up or down at the Clerk's discretion. Each budget item was considered carefully, and the following adjustments were agreed:

Skips – Due to rising costs, this budget will be increased to £800.00.

Trees – In light of unexpected tree works that have left the current budget short, it was agreed to increase the budget to £6,500.00.

Bus Shelters – As three bus shelters require refurbishment, the budget will be increased to £3,500.00.

Footpaths – A slight increase was agreed, raising the budget to £2,000.00.

Following a carefully considered discussion, Cllr Golding proposed **"we approve the precept request as agreed and refer this to the F&M Committee for their consideration"** This was seconded by Cllr Samaroo and unanimously agreed. **ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

W.13.10.25 Footpath Group Report – Cllr Oakley provided a brief update, confirming that although he has stepped back from the group, it remains active under the leadership of Cllr Beioley and a local resident. He requested that the Clerk contact Cllr Beioley to provide a monthly update, so this can be reported to the Works Committee on a regular basis. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.14.10.25 Chris Attwood's report – A copy of Chris Attwood's report was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. Cllr Samaroo enquired whether all noticeboards were now in a good state of repair. Chris confirmed that the noticeboard at the Valley Playing Field has been temporarily removed and relocated to Bussage Pleasure Ground, with a replacement for the Valley site to be installed as necessary.

Cllr Samaroo informed members that the Remembrance service at Christchurch will be held on Sunday 9th November. She explained that, for many years, she has personally cleaned the memorial in preparation for the occasion, but she is no longer able to continue doing so. As the memorial

belongs to the Parish Council, she asked Chris if he would carry out the cleaning before Remembrance Sunday this year, to which he kindly agreed. **ACTION: Chris Attwood.**

W.15.10.25 Ward Matters – Cllr D Taylor expressed his thanks to ChalCAN for the planting carried out behind Dorrington Court, noting that they have done an excellent job.

Cllr Gardiner raised concerns regarding several Highways matters. He noted that the traffic lights on Cowcombe Hill were not working on Monday and enquired when the necessary repairs would be carried out. He also expressed dissatisfaction with the recent works at Middle Hill, describing the repairs as poor and highlighting the large volume of loose chippings left behind, which need to be cleared. The Clerk confirmed that these issues have been reported to Highways and that she would be providing an update to Full Council. She advised that the repairs at Middle Hill had been inspected during a site visit and audit which was carried out last week. Highways immediately informed the contractors, who will be returning to rectify the defects at no additional cost to either the taxpayer or Highways. The works at Cowcombe Hill are expected to be carried out at the same time. While a date has not yet been confirmed, the matter is being treated as a priority.

Cllr Gardiner also raised concerns regarding a significantly increased water bill at the Middle Hill site, which totalled approximately £1,200. The Clerk confirmed that the increase was isolated to this site and advised that the Assistant Clerk had recently been made aware of a sprinkler system set up by a tenant. While it was acknowledged that the summer had been exceptionally dry, the bill was still considerably higher than expected. The Assistant Clerk has contacted all tenants at the Middle Hill site to inform them of the increased cost. Cllr Gardiner suggested that the Committee should consider this matter in more detail given the unusually high bill. The Clerk will add this matter to the November agenda for further discussion. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Samaroo reported having seen a white van driving around Bussage, with the occupants stopping to go through and remove items from residents' skips. Unfortunately, she was unable to note the vehicle's registration number but asked that people remain vigilant and report any similar activity if observed.

W.16.10.25 Any Other Matters - There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 7.44pm.