

East Coker Parish Council AGM Meeting Minutes – 13th May 2026 6.30pm

Attending Councillors: Cllr Cowen, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Costello, Cllr Mead, Cllr Walker, Cllr Hall, Cllr Carter-Uren, Cllr Chauveau and Cllr Haigh.

26/75 To receive any apologies and reasons for non-attendance Cllr Sugg, Cllr Wintersgill.

26/76 There were no declarations of interest in items on this agenda

26/77 Chairperson's Annual Report. **New Pavilion.** Following on from Planning Permission which was granted earlier in 2025, a budget was agreed and a national tender for a building contractor was instigated. Various fund-raising activities were held (see below) and a loan from the Public Works Loan Board was applied for. Once the loan had been secured, the tender concluded and a contractor chosen, the old building was emptied and prepared for demolition, which started in July. The contractor warned of delays early on and the actual date for taking over the building slipped somewhat but was largely on budget. This was a huge effort by most of the Councillors but especially the Pavilion Modernisation Committee who oversaw the project from start to finish. Considering the idea had first been proposed in 2018 but was delayed due to Covid and subsequent large building cost increases, this became an endurance feat but hopefully will be appreciated by many in the Parish for many years to come. This new pavilion greatly enhances the facilities available in the parish and has been designed to comply with FA standards so that increased use can be made by the Cockerels Football Club and perhaps persuade a new East Coker Cricket Club to form. It also has a spacious (but much smaller than the Village Hall) meeting room and kitchen that can be hired by parishioners for meetings, parties, exhibitions or talks etc. Running costs will also be kept to a minimum by incorporating the latest technologies in solar panels, battery storage, thermal insulation and heating systems. **Fund-raising.** In order to help meet the large costs of the new pavilion it was decided to raise as much money as we could by holding local events. Several initiatives were implemented including the 100 Lottery Club, a Summer Lunch at Hymerford House, a Race Evening and the Nativity Play in the Paddock. Each event was fully attended, was great fun and due to the hard work of the Councillors raised a considerable amount of money – all of which went to the Pavilion Modernisation Fund. We would like to thank all the members of the public who came to these events and were so generous with their contributions. **Planning.** The Keyford development plan in the north-east of the parish has started again with a new planning application which now includes Phosphate Mitigation measures. The ECPC has been keeping a close eye on how this is evolving and will be involved in the process as much as is allowed to make sure that the best result is achieved for the Parish. Currently we are waiting for the Planning Committee Meeting to be convened by Somerset Council and will keep the Parish up to date on the website and in newsletters. Although a planning application for 14 industrial units to be built at Halves Lane was, after much opposition by the ECPC and locals, rejected by Somerset Council, to our dismay the applicant appealed against this decision. Having heard the extent of the local opposition we were determined that the appeal would not be granted. A planning consultant was again hired to write a professional rebuttal of the developer's ideas and a petition was raised to show the Inspector how much the local people were against this unnecessary and ugly idea on a greenfield site between the beautiful villages of North and East Coker. The door-to-door petition showed an almost unanimous rejection of the application and gathered nearly 700 signatures. We are awaiting the final decision. **Cemetery.** The cemetery alterations are now complete and the badgers have been safely moved on (for now at least!). There is still some tidying of the new ground to be completed and the rabbits to be discouraged, but the space that has been found for new graves, combined with opening up views to the north, have greatly enhanced this well-loved space. **Nativity Play.** The Live Nativity Play in the Paddock was held again in December and, although it involves a lot of work and planning by the councillors, due to its popularity has become a popular fixture in the parish diary. We will advertise the date well in advance later this year and hope to build on the successful format that has been developed over the last 3 years. **Website.** The ECPC website (www.eastcokerparish.gov.uk) has been completely overhauled and is now kept up to date with not only Parish Council details and news but also with local events and useful information such as bus timetables, mobile library dates and road closures - well worth a regular visit. **Thanks.** Many thanks are due to our two county councillors, Oliver Patrick and Mike Hewitson who have been a constant source of information and willingly assisted our causes. Our Village Ranger has been very busy for us throughout the year and does a fantastic job in keeping the drains clear, the litter picked, the footpaths open (with

safe styles) and a hundred other necessary jobs around the parish. We are very grateful for his hard work. Our Clerk, Jude Heggarty, also deserves our praises and thanks for all the work she does for us while trying to keep us in order.

26/78 Election of Chairperson. There were no volunteers from current Cllrs to step up as Chairperson, so Cllr Cowen said he was happy to continue as Chairperson **Proposed:** Cllr Chauveau **Seconded:** Cllr Walker **Vote:** All agreed. There were no volunteers from current Cllrs for Vice Chair, so Cllr Hodge said she was happy to continue **Proposed:** Cllr Chauveau **Seconded:** Cllr Carter-Uren **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Both Chair and Vice Chair Completed declaration forms.

26/79 Items for discussion and agreement

1. To note any committees and their membership for the coming year. **Pavilion Modernisation** -Cllr Hall, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Costello, Cllr Wintersgill, Cllr Sugg, Cllr Mead (once project signed off committee will dissolve) **HR** – Cllr Hodge, Cllr Hall and Cllr Wintersgill or Cllr Chauveau (TBC) **Finance** – Cllr Hodge & Clerk
2. To allocate roles and responsibilities. **Keyford** - Cllr Walker, Cllr Cowen & Mr J Bennett **Communications** – Cllr Wintersgill, Cllr Carter-Uren, Cllr Chauveau **Christmas** – Cllr Cowen & Cllr Hodge **Pavilion Management** - Cllr Carter-Uren,
Cemetery – Cllr Cowen & Cllr Mead **Planning** – Cllr Costello & Cllr Cowen **Keyford** - Cllr Walker, Cllr Cowen & Mr J Bennett **Recreation Ground** – Cllr Mead **Footpaths** – Cllr Sugg & Cllr Walker **Ranger** – Cllr Sugg & Cllr Walker **Website** – Cllr Chauveau **Communications** – Cllr Wintersgill, Cllr Carter-Uren, Cllr Chauveau **Defib** - Dr & Mrs Summers **LCN** - Cllr Haigh **School** – Cllr Haigh **Health & Safety** – Clerk **Flooding** – Cllr Walker, Cllr Carter Uren **Speed Indicator Device** – Cllr Walker **Highways** – Cllr Mead, Cllr Walker **Recreation Ground** – Cllr Mead
3. Standing Orders were discussed; it was proposed to increase the threshold for obtaining 3 quotes from £1000 to £2000 **Proposed:** Cllr Carter-Uren **Seconded:** Cllr Chauveau **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Clerk to update Standing Orders.
4. Unamended Financial Regulations were adopted. **Proposed:** Cllr Hall **Seconded:** Cllr Carter-Uren **Vote:** All agreed
5. There were no amended Register of Interest forms.

East Coker Parish Council Monthly Meeting Minutes 13th May 2026 7pm

7pm Cllr Mead joined meeting

26/80 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting which was held on the 8th April 2026 were approved. **Proposed:** Cllr Carter-Uren **Seconded:** Cllr Hall **Vote:** 7 agreed with 2 abstentions **Action:** Clerk to publish.

Cllr Cowen talked about the shock and the sadness which was felt at the passing of a very much-loved member of our community, Robert Mead, and said that our thoughts are with his family at this tragic and sad time. He said that Robert will be greatly missed by a very large number of the community. In view of close ties with Robert he thanked the Cllrs for attending the meetings that evening.

26/81 There were no declarations of interest.

26/82 Public Question Time

a 2 members of the public were present and spoke about item 26/89.1

b No Unitary Councillor where present.

26/83 Chair's Report. Cllr Cowen said that we had received notification about the Somerset Council Local Plan and that the Clerk had shared the email with Cllrs. Although this is not due to be adopted until March 2029 he asked if Cllrs could start thinking about any comments that we should make.

26/84 100 Club number draw 1st 1 2nd 30 3rd 34 Action: Clerk to pay

26/85 To discuss and make observations on SC Planning Applications

a **15/01000/OUT Location:** Keyford. Management of public open spaces with reference to an email which Clerk had shared from Simon Fox. Cllr Cowen said he didn't think we were in a position to make a decision in the management of the open spaces at this stage due to lack of knowledge. Cllr Hall said it lacked much detail and Cllr Walker said that it was quite vague and we needed more information. **Action:** Cllr Cowen will email Simon Fox at SC. Cllr Cowen advised that he had emailed Yeovil Town Council to ask if they would discuss an ECPC proposal to change the parish boundary so that the Keyford development would be moved into YTC's area. Clerk advised that she thought that there would need to be a referendum for this, and that could also trigger a boundary review for all neighbouring villages. Cllr Cowen will advise once YTC have responded.

b **26/00857/HOU Location:** Maple House, Burton Lane **Applications:** Replacement Juliet balcony. Application was discussed and Cllrs agreed that they had no objections **Proposed:** Cllr Walker **Seconded:** Cllr Costello **Vote:** All Agreed **Action:** Clerk to update SC Planning

26/86 To consider any recent planning applications from Somerset Council (South), received in the days after the agenda has been circulated and prior to this meeting. There were no planning applications during this time.

26/87 April Planning Decisions Clerk advised that with reference to 25/02755/FUL (Lyneham Bungalow near Coker Court) the Planning Application had been withdrawn.

26/88 Memorial Requests to remember the late Donald Bissett was discussed and approved. **Action:** Clerk to update applicant.

26/89 Matters for discussion and resolution:

1. Placing a bench at the Rec to remember the late Gerry Smith. This item was discussed with the family present. Cllrs agreed that it was a lovely idea and that the bench would be placed on the main pitch side of the Rec. It will be resin and have a plaque. The family will contact the Clerk when they have sourced the bench with further details.

Proposed: Cllr Hall **Seconded:** Cllr Walker **Action:** Family to contact Clerk once further details of bench have been sourced.

2. Opening of the Pavilion. It was agreed that the official opening of the Pavilion would take place on the 4th July. 3pm till 6 pm, and light refreshments would be served. **Action:** Cllr Haigh to source sound system or possibly a band and see if he can get a celebrity to attend and cut the ribbon, Cllr Chauveau will ask Dag Design to make a banner.

3. Future of the 100 Club. It was decided that now the Pavilion had been finished that the 100 club would be rebranded and monies raised would go towards upgrading the Rec play area. **Action:** Cllr Chauveau will update website information and Cllr Carter-Uren will also investigate if any grants are available to help with the upgrade.

4. Clerk advised that the Football Club would like to chain harrow the football pitches. Cllrs agreed they were happy for them to proceed. **Action:** Clerk to advise football Club

5. It was agreed that the Football Club annual rent would go up in line with RPI inflation rate (as per the contract) of 4.3%. **Action:** Clerk to update the club.

6. It was agreed that the Pre School monthly rent would go up in line with inflation rate of 4.3%RPI (as per the contract). **Action:** Clerk to Update Pre-School

7. Rec gate and play area fence. Clerk said that the gate into the Rec and the fence around the play area needed replacing. As there are plans to upgrade the play area it was felt that the fence could stay for the time being, but gate should be replaced. Clerk advised that she was waiting on a quote from the Ranger. Cllrs agreed that if it was under £1000 Clerk can instruct to proceed.

10. Cllr Mead said that Dunnock Lane and Burton Lane footpaths were very wet and that he had met a contractor at both locations who had agreed a price to dig out and make good, plus take away the soil. Clerk advised that she had not received any quote and asked that it was sent through. Cllrs agreed that this was a fair price and said they were happy for the work to proceed. **Proposed:** Cllr Hall **Seconded** Cllr Walker **Vote:** All Agreed **Action:** Cllr Mead to instruct the contractor.

8.50 pm Cllr Haig left meeting

26/90 Correspondence received from Somerset Council. None

26/91 Discuss Parishioner Correspondence. None

26/92 Clerks Report Clerk will be on holiday from the 16th May and back on the 26th May. She has asked if Cllrs wanting to contact her could do so on the ECPC WhatsApp group and not on her private WhatsApp .

26/93 Working group updates

A The Pavilion

1. Cllr Hodge said she would organise a meeting of the Pavilion Modernisation Committee to go through items needing to be finalised with the building contractor before the hand-over and any items still to be provisioned for the pavilion.

2. Appliance Warranties. Clerk advised that she could not find any paperwork for the new appliances apart from the fridge freezer. Cllr Costello will request all details from MKN Building supplies for the integrated appliances.

3. Crockery. Cllr Sugg has kindly donated all the crockery for the new kitchen, but this is under the proviso that if she needs to use it she can. Cllr Mead had a list of items which still needed to be purchased, and Cllr Hodge agreed that she would do this before the football club end of season party on the 16th May.

4. Chairs: It was agreed that new Chairs are to be ordered **Action:** Clerk to order and Cllr Carter Uren would take delivery of them at the Pavilion.

5. Cleaning quotes. It was agreed that we would request that the cleaning is done once a month initially, preferably at the end. It was felt that the cleaning of the windows should be done on an ad-hoc basis. **Action:** Clerk to update Claires Cleaning Service.

B Parish Communications. Cllr Cowen is to ask J. Snelling if he would agree to photograph the inside and out of the pavilion for publicity uses. Cllr Carter Uren asked for newsletter articles to be provided before 10th June.

C LCN Steve Haigh had left the meeting, so no report was given.

26/94 Finance

To approve the monthly items of expenditure and those paid under delegated powers. **Proposed:** Cllr Hall **Seconded:** Cllr Walker **Vote:** All Agreed **Action:** Clerk to action

26/95 To discuss and identify Highways Issues. Some potholes in the village have been repaired but not all. There is still no date for the works at the triangle to be carried out.

26/96 To discuss and identify items for the Village Ranger. No particular areas of concern were raised.

26/97 Agenda items for the next meeting which will be on the 10th June 2026 at East Coker Pavilion:

Opening.

Cemetery pricing for 2026/27

Meeting ended at 9.20pm

Agreed at the 10th June PC meeting