

Chris Ring, Locum Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) & Proper Officer

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CHACEWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting 09th September 2026

In Attendance: Cllr James Godolphin (Chair) {JG}, Cllr John Carley {JC},
Cllr Rachel Sutton {RS} and Cllr Michael Bruce {MB}, Chris Ring (Parish Clerk/RFO) {PC}.

Members of the public were in attendance {MoP}

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr Daniel Martin (Vice Chair) {DM},
2. To receive declarations of interest: No declarations of interests were received.

3. Public Question Time: Members of the public spoke on various items.

3.1 Public participation included questions and representations concerning planning application PA26/02075 – Land at Acland Farm, Blackwater, particularly in relation to highway matters, odour, emissions, slurry storage capacity and the information currently being considered by National Highways.

The Council noted the matters raised and confirmed that its role was to consider and submit its comments to Cornwall Council as the local planning authority.

3.2 Concerns were raised regarding vehicles parking on the junction of Church Hill and the main road. The Clerk confirmed that he had requested a meeting with the Cornwall Council Highways Manager to discuss this and other highways matters.

3.3 A question was asked regarding item 9.

4. Clerks Report

4.1 Update on Playground Repairs

The Clerk reported that repairs to the play area had been undertaken and had resolved the immediate issue. The swing sets remained outstanding due to an issue with the bearings and the height of the replacement equipment. The contractor was obtaining the necessary parts and considering a solution. The Council noted the update.

4.2 Update on Utilities Contracts

The Clerk reported that a new 12-month electricity contract had been negotiated for the Recreation Centre, substantially reducing the cost of the previous out-of-contract arrangement.

The Clerk would also review the electricity arrangements for the toilets and WI Hall and would investigate whether a better rate could be obtained for water services.

The feed-in tariff system at the car park toilets was reported to be showing an error and the Clerk / (RS) would liaise with the electrician regarding this.

The Council noted the update.

4.3 Update on Banking Mandates

The Clerk reported that the banking mandate changes were progressing.

Some changes had been completed, although the previous Clerk's access remained temporarily active. Once the changes were complete, the Clerk would become the principal user and manage the remaining authorised signatories.

The Council noted that there might be a short period during the transition when access to the account was restricted.

5. Recreation Ground Access Ramp

The Council considered four quotations for the excavation and associated works required for the Recreation Centre access ramp. The lowest quotation was £660 plus VAT for the initial excavation, removal of tree stumps, clearance and sculpting of the bank.

It was noted that concreting, shuttering and stone walling would be undertaken separately.

It was RESOLVED to appoint Andrew Douce to undertake the initial digger and excavation works.

The remaining works were deferred pending confirmation of the quotation for concreting and shuttering and further consideration of the stonework costs.

6. Car Park Toilet – Plumbing and Electrical Issues

The Council considered the plumbing and electrical issues affecting the car park toilet.

It was reported that the sensor-operated flush system and external lighting required remedial works. JJ Electrical and Dave Hardy had been instructed to proceed, with parts ordered and works expected to be completed during the following week. The Council RESOLVED that the works should proceed.

7. Recreation Ground / Centre

7.1 Quotes – Reports

The Council considered the quotations for the structural, building condition and electrical reports.

It was agreed that the structural survey should be prioritised.

The previous quotation from MBA for the structural survey was approximately £2,250.

The Council RESOLVED to proceed with the structural survey.

The building condition report and full electrical report were deferred pending further consideration of the Council's financial position and the outcome of the structural survey. The Council would also investigate obtaining an initial assessment of the electrical and mechanical systems to assist in determining the works required.

7.2 Recreation Centre Working Group / Parish Council Meeting

The Council considered the outcome of the meeting between the Recreation Centre Working Group and the Parish Council. The Council agreed that the works should continue to be progressed in phases, with the structural condition of the building being established as a priority.

The Clerk reported that contact had been made with the Council's insurers and their legal advisers regarding the historic matters associated with the Recreation Centre. The insurers' legal team had indicated that there may be a viable case but required a complete evidence pack before providing further advice.

The Clerk would continue to collate the relevant evidence.

A further potential source of specialist assistance with preparing the case was also being explored.

7.3 Membership of Recreation Centre Working Group

The Council reviewed the membership of the Recreation Centre Working Group.

It was RESOLVED that the following members be appointed to the Working Group:

Ed Crossley, Sian Bennetts, Steve Leech, Richard Bennetts and Dan Cape

The Working Group would continue to report to the Parish Council.

7.4 Terms of Reference – Recreation Centre Working Group

The Terms of Reference for the Recreation Centre Working Group were considered and RESOLVED

The Council had previously been circulated with the revised Terms of Reference.

8. IT Security & Clerk Equipment

The Council considered the provision of a new laptop and secure automated backup arrangements.

The Clerk advised that an automated backup system was now operating and that Council documents were being securely maintained using the existing cloud and backup arrangements.

It was agreed to defer consideration of purchasing a new laptop and additional backup equipment and review the position when the Council considers its permanent file and IT arrangements.

9. Charity and Trusts – Status, Trustees and Management

The Council considered the arrangements for the three charities/trusts relating to the Recreation Ground, Old Recreation Ground and Millennium Green. It was noted that the current arrangements resulted in significant administrative requirements and that the charitable objectives of the three organisations were substantially similar. The Council discussed the possibility of amalgamating the three charities/trusts and making the Parish Council the sole corporate trustee. The Clerk reported that the Charity Commission records currently showed individual trustees rather than the Parish Council acting as sole corporate trustee, and that the constitutions and existing arrangements required further investigation.

It was RESOLVED that the process of investigating the amalgamation of the three charities/trusts and the Parish Council becoming sole corporate trustee should continue, including review of the constitutions and Charity Commission records.

10. Planning Applications

10.1 PA26/02075 – Land at Acland Farm, Blackwater

Proposal: Excavation works to create an earth bunded slurry lagoon, fitted with liner and cover.

The Council considered the application and the matters raised during public participation.

It was noted that responses to questions raised by National Highways remained outstanding and that further information was awaited from the planning officer.

The Council agreed that Councillors should review the information and documents on the planning portal and that the Parish Council should await the outstanding information before finalising its comments.

It was RESOLVED to arrange a further public meeting concerning the application once the outstanding information was available.

(JC) would contact the planning officer, Jeremy Content, for an update and copy the Clerk into the correspondence.

The Clerk would seek to arrange a suitable venue, with the meeting to be held as soon as practicable following receipt of the outstanding information and, if possible, before 21 October 2026.

The Council would publicise the meeting through its usual channels and consider additional publicity to reach residents who had attended the previous site meeting.

The Parish Council's formal planning comments would be considered following receipt and review of the outstanding information.

10.2 Additional Planning Applications

No additional planning applications requiring a response before the next scheduled meeting were considered.

10.3 Planning Decisions

No planning decisions were reported.

11. Finances

11.1 The Council considered payments requiring approval.

It was RESOLVED to approve payment of: Two Tregothnan invoices of £300 each; and

A small invoice relating to a lamp/lamp-post.

11.2 The Clerk reported that no further request for information had been received from the external auditor since the previous update. Further information had been provided to the external auditor and the Council was awaiting a response. The Council noted the update.

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to individuals, as described in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

13. Exempt Staffing Matters

13.1 Staff Member – Hours and Pay

The Council considered the current arrangements and agreed that the staff member's role, hours, pay and employment arrangements should be formally regularised.

13.2 Locum Clerk – Current Arrangements

It was RESOLVED to extend the current Locum Clerk arrangement for a further three months, to the end of January 2027, to allow continuity and a proper handover.

13.3 Permanent Clerk – Recruitment

The Council agreed to review the recruitment of a permanent Clerk/RFO at a future meeting, with the matter to be considered again in November 2026.

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm

The next regular meeting of the Council, Wednesday 30th September 2026