Written councillor report

Submitted by Cllr Connor Groves
Tatworth & Forton Parish Council | Full Council
Thursday, 5 November 2026

Local matters and practical follow-up

Matter	Position at 5 November 2026	Local impact / follow-up
Perry Street / number 30 bus [1]	Perry Street is due to close for Openreach works on **12-13 November**. The number 30 will divert between Tatworth Church and the Tytherleigh Arms. Stops at Loveridge Lane, Lower Coombses, Waterlake Road, Perry Street, Linkhay Orchard and Crossways will not be served.	Publicise the disruption. First Bus advises passengers towards Chard and Taunton from Tatworth Church to wait on the A358, opposite the bus shelter. Check the operator's notice before travel.
Flood resilience [2]	The £50m Government-funded county programme includes additional gully clearance and community preparedness support. No parish-specific allocation or works timetable has been confirmed for this report.	Identify recurrent flooding and blocked highway drains, with exact locations and existing report references. Seek delivery dates for outstanding maintenance.
Planning decisions [3]	National delegation rules took effect on **31 October**. Householder and many minor applications generally require officer decisions. Other eligible cases need the prescribed gateway and nominated officer/member agreement for committee referral.	Submit timely representations based on material planning considerations, including drainage, road safety, amenity and policy. Parish objections do not automatically secure a committee hearing.
Planning enforcement [4]	The October briefing reported **more than 1,200 outstanding cases** county-wide. No updated backlog total is available in the material used for this report.	Delays can prolong uncertainty for neighbours and weaken confidence in planning controls. Collate unresolved parish case references and seek written progress, priority and next-update dates.

October matters are retained only where they remain relevant to November. Suggested follow-up actions above are not recorded as completed casework.

County-wide matters

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Council finances [4, 5]	Forecast 2026/27 overspend: **£23.9m**, reduced from £29.1m at Quarter 1. The briefings identify a separate **£40.3m gap for 2027/28**, potentially increased by continuing pressures.	The improvement does not resolve the financial risk. Residents need reliable services, deliverable savings and clear explanations of service effects. The figures concern different years and should not simply be added.
Children and families [4, 6]	November's briefing reports EHCP timeliness of **6.4% within 20 weeks** and concerns over care placement instability. These are historical indicators; the underlying EHCP reporting period has not been independently rechecked.	EHCP delays can leave families waiting for clarity about support. Monitor waiting times and family experience. The Childhood Lottery measures wider circumstances and is not a simple council performance ranking.
Parking charges [7]	A **10% increase** in existing council car park charges is approved from **January 2027**, rounded to the nearest 10p. Wider tiered changes are scheduled for autumn 2027. Currently free parking remains subject to further work and engagement.	Residents using Chard and other towns for work, shopping and services face higher costs. Assess access and business impacts; engage with any further local proposals.
Energy support [8]	A one-off **£100 payment** for eligible Council Tax band A-D households is expected from **January 2027**. Eligible Direct Debit payers will be paid automatically. Other payment arrangements and a discretionary scheme are being developed.	Publicise official guidance when available. Residents do not need to contact Somerset Council about the payment at this stage.
Nature grants [9]	The Community Seed Fund offers **up to £10,000** for eligible nature recovery projects. Applications close **4 December 2026**.	Consider a parish habitat, wildlife corridor or feasibility project against the published criteria. Pre-application advice: LNRS@somerset.gov.uk.
Wessex devolution [10]	Government has backed a mayoral authority covering Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. Elections are expected in **May 2028**; detailed arrangements remain to be settled.	Follow consultation and implementation arrangements. Rural transport, access to services and parish input into investment decisions are relevant local priorities.