

CHEDDON FITZPAINE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 10th October 2022

In the Committee Room of the Memorial Hall at Cheddon Fitzpaine TA2 8JY

www.cfpc.co.uk

Present: Parish Cllrs Isaacs, Batsch, Wilson & Baker. SCC Cllrs Deakin, Fothergill & Cavill. SWT Cllr Tully.

In attendance: Mrs S Millard-Jones, Clerk, & approximately 14 members of the public.

Cllr Isaacs chaired the meeting.

10/01 To receive apologies for absence: Cllr Woollacott was unable to attend at the start of the meeting but intended to be present within the first half an hour.
Parish Cllr West, West Monkton Assistant Clerk Mrs K Welsh, NP Chairman Kelvin Tutill & SWT Cllr Pritchard.

10/02 To receive declarations of personal/prejudicial/disclosable pecuniary interests: None

10/03 To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting. The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council on 28th September 2022 having been previously circulated, were taken as read. It was **resolved** to approve the Minutes. Cllr Baker abstained as he was not present at the September meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

Q: Wants the Parish Council (PC) to know that there is enormous support in the village for what councillors are trying to do. Disappointed in the District Councillors and will not be voting for them and actively will make sure that nobody else does. Full support for the PC and what they are doing in the Community Governance Review (CGR).

Q: Alan Debenham spoke as a Parish Councillor for Staplegrove and raised concerns with the CGR as Staplegrove is being abolished. Feels that the CGR should sit around resident support and doesn't feel that has happened. Attended the SWT and the SCC meetings and felt as though they are not really listening. Sent an ultimatum and told them that they are breaking the law and this letter was shared with Cheddon Fitzpaine (CF) Clerk who then forwarded to all Parish Councillors. There must not only be current support, but there should also be residents standing up and saying that they wish to go into the town council which they didn't. Cllr Debenham is planning to take the matter to the local government ombudsman and recommends that CFPC does the same, a response should be received within 28 days.

Q: Looking for answers from the elected representatives. What benefits will be achieved from the greater town council.

****Cllr Woollacott joined the meeting****

****Cllr Woollacott chaired the meeting****

One of the greatest assets at risk is the Country Park (CP) and many residents feel utterly betrayed, a community is about to be ripped apart. Disgusting that no fight was made on behalf of CFPC. The money that the town centre gets will be used in the Town centre not in the tiny parish. Northwalls and Nerrols already pay a management company.

A: Cllr Tully stated that it wasn't a political decision and that it was taken by the mixed party working group. Cllr Deakin – voted for the proposal, wants to dispel that he isn't acting for the residents. He looks after Priorswood and they need to be represented. Believes that funding can be secured for the CP because of the new Town Council, residents can only be heard if they are being part of it.

Cllr Cavill – politics have no place in PC's. As a District Council, one must act in the best interests of the District. The initial meeting that allowed the reconsideration of boundaries – he sees this as being a

disgraceful process. Started to fight for an amendment to the boundaries, but in that meeting, the legal letter was shared with all members present of the working group. Disagrees that residents will be paying more. The greatest objective should be for the benefit of the local area.

Cllr Baker sits on District Council representing Priorswood and Unitary for North Taunton. Abstained rather than voting against – Priorswood needs representation CFPC have worked hard and wanted to stand in solidarity with them. Couldn't go against as Priorswood needed it.

Q: Agrees with the initial proposal to just consider the unparished area. CFPC have worked hard over at least the 11 years that she has lived here. But the Maidenbrook ward will only be looked after by one representative, all of the current parish councillors already work hard and there are 6 of them. Currently only 1 councillor for Maidenbrook.

A: Cllr Woollacott explained that initially Maidenbrook ward was only 1 councillor because of when it was initially set up and there was such a small number of residents. CFPC have requested this to be amended as it doesn't represent the numbers, this was historic from pre 2000. Currently 5 people represent 300 and 1 Parish Councillor represents the 1,500 in Maidenbrook. There will be around 25 Councillors in the new parish based on population.

Q: It sounds like it is a financial decision. Societal and cultural aspects haven't been considered.

A: Cllr Deakin – by tapping in financially then the cultural and societal things can be done.

10/04 Reports:

SCC Cllr Deakin:

Local Community Networks

A consultation regarding the development of the much-anticipated Local Community Networks (LCNs) is soon set to launch. Somerset Council will cover a very large geographical area and so needs local committees of the council where voices can be heard, partners brought together, and decisions taken with the benefit of local knowledge and experience.

Throughout the summer officers of County and District Councils have been working on options for the following aspects of LCNs:

Function – the roles and responsibilities of LCNs in the first and subsequent years of Somerset Council.

Form – options for the boundaries of the LCNs, using existing democratic boundaries and community infrastructure.

Name – does Local Community Network describe the form and function of the committees? Finance – as inflation impacts on all council budgets, LCNs must be affordable in the first year yet able to develop in future years as savings are realised from the move to one council. Governance – as Committees of Somerset Council, the LCNs will have a formal role and be supported by Democratic Services at the Council.

The consultation will be launched on 1st September and run to mid-October, and will seek the views of parish, town & city councils, partner organisations and individuals on the function, form and name for LCNs. A comprehensive communications strategy is currently being drawn up ready for the launch of the online consultation. The responses will form an important part of the recommendations for the Somerset County Council Executive and Full Council.

Finance Update

Somerset County Council, like many councils, is experiencing significant financial challenges in the current year. Inflationary factors, as we are all experiencing in our home lives, affect a large Council on a large scale. Energy costs, travel costs, increases in construction materials have all added to our costs and in turn that has affected the pay award for this year. SCC is part of a national negotiation and the latest employers' offer, equivalent to 5.5% increase, has not been accepted.

Other factors are having an adverse effect on Adults and Children's services, with increases in external placements post-Covid and the same inflationary factors impacting on the companies and organisations that provide residential placements. They are also seeing greater challenges in providing the right level of staffing, with a very competitive labour market throughout the country.

The Council's Senior Leadership Team is already working on plans to reduce the projected overspend, and some areas of the Council are now projecting underspends. Of course, this financial year's projections have

an impact on the first-year budget of the new Somerset Council. Savings will be made when the five councils come together as one Unitary Council but those savings won't be in place on day one, so it is essential that different ways of working and other plans are put in place early in the autumn. The Executive will continue to receive monthly budget monitoring reports as well as the ongoing reporting on Local Government Reorganisation.

Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation

A consultation on council tax support for the new unitary Somerset Council has launched. This is the first major consultation for the new Somerset Council and it proposes that the lowest income households across Somerset get 100% council tax relief. Somerset's four district councils currently offer varying levels of council tax support. The proposed changes would harmonise support for working-age people on low incomes across the county and come into effect on 1 April 2023, with the creation of the new Council. For more information: <https://somersetnewsroom.com/2022/07/25/consultation-on-council-taxsupport-scheme-launched/>

Help shape the future of council services in Somerset

People in Somerset are encouraged to join a new Customer Panel and help shape the future of council services.

From April 2023, the new unitary Somerset Council will deliver all council services to all communities – from waste collection and adult social care to housing, benefits and parks.

The Customer Panel is being established to ensure residents are at the heart of those services. No special skills are required, all you need is a willingness to take part in three research topics each year and provide honest and constructive feedback. Panel members will have the chance to take part in online surveys, one-to-one interviews, usability tests and discussion groups.

For more information: <https://playbook.somerset.gov.uk/our-customer-panel/>

Somerset County Council backs new Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal

Somerset County Council has welcomed the launch of Somerset Community Foundation's Somerset Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal.

The Council has contributed an initial £50,000 donation to support the launch of the appeal. The Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal is an urgent call for donations which will be used to help fund local charities supporting local people living in poverty through the cost-of-living crisis.

Donations will fund crucial local work such as debt advice organisations, food banks, mental health support, help for people with disabilities or older people, and homelessness organisations.

To donate to the Somerset Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal today visit: www.somersetcf.org.uk/costofliving or call 01749 344949.

When the fund is open, any community group or charitable organisation wishing to apply for a grant should visit the SCF website where they can find guidance on how to make an application:

www.somersetcf.org.uk/apply

For more details about the fund, visit:

<https://www.somersetcf.org.uk/somerset-cost-of-living-crisisappeal-launched>

As fuel prices spiral during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis Somerset County Council and Somerset Bus Partnership are joining forces to encourage people to 'BUS IT'.

The campaign aims to highlight that with households under financial pressure buses have never been more relevant, offering a cheaper travel alternative and the chance to save on fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, while at the same time protecting the environment by helping to cut congestion and reducing your carbon footprint.

Following the withdrawal of the government's Bus Recovery Grant, bus operators are currently weighing up the viability of routes in Somerset, and one of the key factors operators will use in assessing viability is the number of passengers on each route.

Bus use in Somerset is slowly climbing again, but is currently at about 70 per cent of levels compared to pre-Covid.

For more information: Bus it – You know it makes sense – Travel Somerset

Climate Summit to help Somerset businesses increase sustainability

Somerset businesses are being urged to play their part in combating the climate emergency – with a conference offering insight into practical steps they can take to become more sustainable.

The Somerset Business Climate Summit 2022 will take place at Queens College in Taunton on Wednesday 21st September between 10am and 1pm.

The Summit will highlight best practice and raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges for businesses as we shift toward a low carbon economy.

Guest speakers from businesses of different sizes and industries, including My Carbon Coach, The Field Works, and recently certified B Corp New Leaf Design will discuss topics including the easiest ways for businesses to cut carbon, what Net Zero means, the journey to B Corp, and sustainable agriculture and manufacturing. Businesses will be encouraged examine their current business models and make pledges to reduce their carbon footprints.

For more information: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency/climate-emergencybusinesses/climate-summit/>

Successful joint funding bid to tackle violence against women and girls

Somerset County Council and North Somerset Council have jointly secured an additional £317,694 from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund to continue to make public spaces and streets safer for women and girls. This follows the success of the neighbouring councils' 2021 campaign 'It can stop if we change together'. This raised awareness, tackled sexual harassment and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) to make public places and streets safer.

For more information: <https://somersetnewsroom.com/2022/07/25/successful-joint-funding-bid-totackle-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

Specialists appointed to take Somerset arts and culture strategy forward

Specialist partners have been appointed to help develop a five-year cultural strategy for the new Somerset Council that comes into being in April 2023.

Arts Council England, in partnership with Somerset's five councils – Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton, and South Somerset district councils, plus Somerset County Council – have committed to invest in developing the strategy and have procured the services of cultural consultants, The Fifth Sector.

Key aims and objectives of the strategy include:

To raise awareness and promote the role that culture and creativity can play in enriching communities and improving the quality of life, health, wellbeing and the local economy for Somerset residents, local businesses and visitors.

To make sure that a cultural identity for arts and culture in Somerset is at the heart of the new authority's strategic plans.

To identify new job opportunities in culture and the creative industries and raise the profile of the county's vibrant creative sector.

New electric minibuses hit the roads in Somerset

Somerset County Council now has two fully electric, specially adapted wheelchair accessible minibuses available for use.

These vehicles are Maxus EV80 minibuses and are the first of their kind in the county. They have a capacity of ten passengers, and the seats within can be adapted so that three wheelchairs can be safely included.

On one charge, the buses can travel approximately 114 miles currently. They are currently being used in the Bridgwater area, but their use may well be expanded across the county in the future.

£1,500 of vouchers awarded to creative writing winners and Somerset Schools

Three winners of the Fostering In Somerset Creative Writing Competition each scooped £250 in vouchers, as well as £250 in vouchers for their chosen school.

Somerset residents of all ages were encouraged to write a short story of up to 1,000 words for Foster Care Fortnight in May for the chance to win a share of £1,500 of vouchers.

Somerset County Council's fostering and library services received over 100 entries and judges whittled these down to three winners.

All three winning stories can be read at

<https://www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk/resources/storycomp.htm>

SCC Cllr Cavill:

Somerset County Council Finances: As at the end of July (month 4) the overall projection was for an overspend on budget of £23.9m (up from £18.5m in June). The significant variances were: Adult Services - £14.0m adverse variance against budget; a deterioration in position of £4.0m from month three.

Children's Services - £15.5m adverse variance against budget; a deterioration of £1.5m from month three. Economic & Community Infrastructure (Highways etc) has a £1.1m adverse variance against their budget. These figures are already 2 months out of date – the trend remains very concerning.

Local Government Reorganisation: Following the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset, vesting day for the new Unitary Council remains as 1st April 2023.

Dillington House: Somerset County Council's Executive has confirmed that the council will seek to end its activities at Dillington House in Ilminster on 30th September 2023. The council has leased the 16th Century Grade 2 listed country house since September 1966 and has used it as a centre for Adult Education, conferences/business meetings and more recently for social events and weddings. It also currently accommodates the Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL). The current lease has a break clause in March 2023 and the council is seeking to adjust the terms of the lease to enable it to continue activities until the end of September 2023, allowing it to deliver weddings already booked for next summer and minimise disruption to academic courses and other events.

Flu Jab: This winter, it is anticipated that as this is our first flu season since 2019, we will all have less immunity and are therefore more likely to catch flu compared to previous years. The flu season in the Southern Hemisphere can often predict the potential for a similar experience in Northern Hemisphere countries. This year, Australia's flu season started earlier and infected more people, particularly children aged five to nine. More information on flu vaccinations can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>

Covid boosters: Residents aged 50 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, those aged 5 years and over in a clinical risk group and health and social care staff are being offered a booster of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine this autumn. Appointments are available from the National Booking Service. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

Stoptober: Stoptober is back for its 11th year calling on smokers to kick the habit once and for all and join 2.3 million others who all quit since the campaign launched over a decade ago. Somerset smokers are being asked to seek support and join thousands of others across the country who have signed up to stop smoking this October. Over 6 million adults in England still smoke, and it remains the leading cause of premature death, with almost 75,000 preventable deaths a year. Stoptober offers a range of free quitting tools including: the NHS Quit Smoking App, Facebook messenger bot, Stoptober Facebook online communities, daily emails and SMS, and an online Personal Quit Plan. <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

SWT: No report

10/14 Community Governance Review (CGR)

Cllr Woollacott explained that this item would be held in two sessions. Firstly, an open session to provide an update and then a further session would take place at the end of the meeting and will exclude members of the public.

CFPC has engaged with a solicitor and Kings Counsel, nothing moving forwards may be discussed in the open session.

Cllr Woollacott then gave a brief summary of the CGR to date. He thanked residents who completed the survey both at stage 1 and stage 2. CFPC was the largest parished area that responded. 81% said that they didn't want to be absorbed. This is reflected in the final CGR report. The Working Groups' proposal was taken to SWT and was voted in. CFPC instructed a solicitor who submitted a letter on their behalf, SWT deputy monitoring officer firmly pointed out that it was unchallengeable. SCC had then received the barrister's opinion which hadn't been fully shared and so the decision was taken to go into confidential session to share the information. Two hours later went into open session, a Cllr from Yeovil proposed a guillotine motion which cuts off further discussions. All liberal democrat cllrs approved the guillotine motion.

All that voted could only accept or reject the proposals and couldn't propose any amendments. Then it was taken to SCC as the shadow council.

Cllr Woollacott explained that discussions with the other affected PC's Staplegrove, Comeytrove and Trull had taken place. CFPC feel that their case to remain was good enough and therefore next steps need to be considered in the closed session.

Cllr Cavill left for North Petherton PC meeting

10/05 Joint Projects with West Monkton:

a. Maidenbrook Country Park & Somerset Wood: (R)

The Country Park Working Group (CPWG) had met on the 3rd October and had discussed forecasted expenditure over the next 8/9 months. The CPWG discussed getting bins and benches into the CP, however such items will require planning permission. The CPWG recommended a list of costs totalling £5,500 to be split 50/50 between both parishes. Further costs to be discussed at upcoming CPWG meetings. It was **resolved** to approve the share of the £5,500.

There will be a Remembrance Service at Somerset Wood on Friday 11th November at 2pm.

b. Neighbourhood Plan Review: The Plan is scheduled to go before Full Council on 25th October. NP Chairman Kelvin Tutill has registered to speak during the public question time.

c. Community Fridge: In the process of getting quotes for CCTV camera as having ongoing issues with young people - local schools have been informed.

- Times of Fridge changed to 9am to 4.30pm
- Looking to purchase a bench for the Community Fridge Area
- Starting up a 'Stay and Play' Group shortly – in need of baby/toddler toys/equipment – new facebook page (BACH Stay and Play Group)
- Community Café becoming popular
- Community Quiz Night at Tacchi Morris – 2/11/22 7.30pm – book free tickets at the Tacchi Morris
- Community Christmas Night with 'A Minor Crisis' Band 8pm to 11pm (Tickets from Tacchi Morris at £2.50 each)

10/06 Cheddon Ward:

A contract had been received from BT regarding CFPC adoption of the telephone box. The Clerk was asked to make enquiries regarding getting a defibrillator put in the telephone box. It was **resolved** to sign the contract and to adopt the telephone box.

10/07 Maidenbrook Ward:

The Clerk had been informed by the Northwalls Grange management company that the roads and parking spaces are to be adopted by the District Council but was given no indication to a timeline. The swing has been damaged on Northwalls play area – this has been reported.

10/08 Highways:

Lyngford Lane will be closed on the 26th October for 1 day in order for Wessex Water to seal a manhole. Cheddon Fitzpaine Road, Maidenbrook Lane and Cheddon Lawns will be closed on the 31st October for 3 days to enable Airband to carry out overhead cabling.

10/09 Planning Applications:

08/20/0035 - Creation of Nerrols Neighbourhood Centre comprising of the erection of a 3 storey building with commercial uses at ground floor (incorporating a convenience store, lounge bar/restaurant, hair and beauty salon, office accommodation and employment space for food production and despatch), 36 No. apartments over the 1st and 2nd floors with installation of electric vehicle charging points and a petrol and diesel forecourt with canopy over, landscaped parking area and community and public open space on land off Nerrols Drive, Taunton – To note internal and external consultee reports July and August

10/10 Planning Decisions:

08/22/0006 Change of use of part of unit to a vehicle maintenance workshop with container storage and repair facility, storage and distribution centre, vehicle parking, offices, welfare facilities and other uses within Classes B1 (C), B2 and B8 at Unit M7, Crown Industrial Estate, Venture Way, Taunton Decision of Conditional Approval

08/22/0007/LB Replacement of windows within bay and formation of patio door opening at Maidenbrook Farmhouse, Tudor Park, Priorswood, Taunton – Decision of Conditional Approval

10/11 Reports:

Nerrols: Have set up a parent lending library. Headteacher Mrs Locker is moving to Devon, at the end of the Christmas term, Richard Huish Trust is currently interviewing.

Church Reverend Mary Styles would like to invite everyone to Harvest festival at the church on Sunday 16th Oct at 11am.

Cheddon school – children settling in, but challenges continue with encouraging children to mix and play as expected.

Memorial Hall: Supporting events will all be noted in the newsletter.

10/12 Bus Stops (R) To consider quotes for additional sites and amendments

The Clerk had obtained further quotes as instructed for Stubby Lane and Leigh Road. However, Stubby Lane bus stop isn't in use and the recommendation from Richard Andrews Somerset County Council is that Leigh Road and Nerrols Drive are the bus stops that require shelters. £6,107.20 including ducting for each shelter. The Clerk had been asked to look into bins for the bus stop. Rebecca Staddon had confirmed that the S106 money couldn't be used for bins and ongoing maintenance and therefore CFPC would be responsible for the purchase cost and ongoing maintenance. The Clerk had a quote from SWT for £650 + VAT per bin and informed members that ongoing costs would be £6.66 + VAT per empty.

It was **resolved** to approve the revised quotes for both bus stops and to consider the bins at a later date.

10/13 LCN Consultation (R) To consider options available

a) Feedback from the LCN Conference

Attendees were updated on existing pilots - Bruton focusing on mental health and wellbeing and youth outreach. Bridgwater Town Council pilot had not been successful and required some more time to make progress. Conversations around devolution of assets – no information as to what these will be and or whether PC's can decline them. All pilots explained that some PC's didn't engage and that could be a challenge for many of the LCN's. Devolution won't happen in the first year of the LCN's. Exmoor pilot focused on highways – had a highways assistant who remedied issues quickly, some comments were made on this – that this should happen anyway! Cornwall – Community boards run by remunerated managers – no provision that the Somerset LCN's will have any funded provision. All speakers talked about amending the initial plan and had seen some great results but plenty of challenges – especially based on the mix of parishes within the LCN's.

b) To consider the boundary proposals

CFPC **resolved** to go for Option B. Members of the public are urged to also submit their answers.

10/14 Community Governance Review Update (R) Confidential session to discuss legal negotiations.

****Cllr Baker declared an interest and left the meeting*****

It was **resolved** to close the meeting to the press and members of the public in line with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss legal proceedings surrounding the process of the CGR.

A discussion took place with the solicitor surrounding the next stage for CFPC in terms of legally challenging the CGR.

It was **resolved** to proceed to the next stage and that this may be done as one parish or alongside other affected parishes following their meetings in the next week or so.

10/15 Finance:

a) Approval of Payments & Receipts (R)

Payments

| To whom | Description | Net | VAT | Total | Pay Date | Confirmed on bank Statement |
|--------------------------|--|-----------|---------|-----------|----------|-----------------------------|
| S Millard-Jones | October Salary, Homeworking & Mileage, PAYE & NI (-NEST) | £1,047.22 | £1.65 | £1,048.87 | 31/10/22 | |
| SLCC | Powers & Duties workshop | £30.00 | £6.00 | £36.00 | 13/10/22 | |
| SWT | Bins | £1,125.54 | £225.11 | £1,350.65 | 13/10/22 | |
| Khift Ltd | Legal proceedings | £4,250.00 | £850.00 | £5,100.00 | 13/10/22 | |
| Cheddon Fitzpaine Church | Burial grant | £320.00 | £ | £320.00 | 13/10/22 | |

Debit Card/Direct Debit: To note:

| To whom | Description | Net | VAT | Total | Pay Date | Confirmed on bank Statement |
|-----------|----------------------|--------|-------|--------|----------|-----------------------------|
| SWS | Email addresses | £36.80 | £7.36 | £44.16 | 15/10/22 | |
| NEST | Pension | £35.72 | £ | £35.72 | 31/10/22 | |
| Microsoft | Monthly Subscription | £9.40 | £1.88 | £11.28 | 18/10/22 | |
| SWS | Hosting Inv | £24.00 | £4.80 | £28.80 | 02/10/22 | |
| SWS | Domaine name | £16.50 | £3.30 | £19.80 | 15/10/22 | |

Receipts: To note:

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Precept | | £18,623.42 |
| Parish Grant | | £520.00 |
| | TOTAL | £19,143.42 |

Country Park

| To whom | Description | Net | VAT | Total | Pay Date | Confirmed on bank Statement |
|---------|-------------|-----|-----|-------|----------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | | |

It was **resolved to pay** the above by cheque/internet banking.

b) Approval of the bank reconciliation (R)

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Main Account | £63,478.06 |
| CIL Account | £21.45 |
| NSI Account | £3,123.62 |
| CP Account | £304.11 |
| Total | £66,927.23 |

It was **resolved** to approve the bank reconciliation

c) To consider moving allocated CP budget into the CP account (R)

It was felt by members that this wasn't necessary at this time.

10/16 Budget V Expenditure. To note expenditure versus budget year to date.
This was noted by all members.

10/17 Matters raised by Councillors: None

10/18 Correspondence: All circulated

10/19 Items for next agenda:

- Defibrillator

2022 Dates: 14th November. 5th December.

Meeting closed at 9.23pm

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Chair