

Sampford Brett Parish Council

Parish Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 11th September 2024



Minutes of the Sampford Brett Parish Council Meeting which took place on Wednesday 11th September 2024 and was held at Sampford Brett Village Hall, beginning at 6.30pm.

Parish Councillors Present: J Swan (Chair), N Brodrick (Vice Chair), B Martin, S Miles, J Russell, T Skinner, and S Voller

In Attendance: One Member of the Public and Mrs T-A Biss (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

6.30pm - PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MEETING:

- a) **Questions and comments from members of the public.**
No request had been received from members of the public.
- b) **Request to address the Parish Council from members of the public.**
No request had been received from members of the public.
- c) **Reports from Somerset County Councillors**
Apologies received from Somerset Councillors Cllrs H Davies and R Woods. Cllr Davies and Cllr Woods reports had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

The meeting was then formally opened.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

1.1 None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items (as set out within the Parish Council's Code of Conduct), and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that corresponds with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not prevent any later declarations)

2.1 None

3. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD OF THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12TH JUNE 2024 AND THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12TH AUGUST 2024 (LGA 1972 sch 12, para 41(1))

Resolution:

That the minutes of the meeting of Sampford Brett Parish Council held on 12th June 2024 were approved as being a true and correct record and signed as such.

Resolution:

That the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Sampford Brett Parish Council held on 12th August 2024 were approved as being a true and correct record and signed as such.

4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 4.1 Item 8.1 (page 590) – Chair to continue to try and contact “The Circuit” to clarify Parish Council Contact details.
- 4.2 Item 8.5.2 (page 600) – Minehead and Watchet – Highways Sub-Group meetings now confirmed as:
- Tuesday 3rd December 2024 10:00-13:00 *West Somerset House, Williton
 - Thursday 13th March 2025 10:00-13:00 *West Somerset House, Williton
 - Tuesday 24th June 2025 10:00-13:00 *West Somerset House, Williton
- *Venue to be confirmed*
- 4.3 Item 6.3 (page 604) – Cllr Swan reported that the meeting arranged by Williton Parish Council inviting neighbouring Parish Council chairs/representatives to discuss any further action that may be taken following the successful appeal and granting of planning permission for the Washford solar farm and the ramifications of it, had a very positive feel.

Those present agreed to support the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) if they sought judicial review of the decision. After the meeting CPRE took legal advice on the advisability of seeking a judicial review and were advised against taking the matter further.

- 4.4 Item 6.3 (page 604) - Cllr Voller to discuss further with members of the Village Hall Committee the possibility of displaying The King’s portrait within the Village Hall.

5 UPDATE ON SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON PLANNING APPLICATIONS & APPEALS

- 5.1 No updates on planning applications or appeals decisions. Comments from the Conservation Officer had been received on planning application 3/28/24/001.
- 5.2 Planning application appeal - 3/28/23/003 Demolition of Dwelling and Erection of 3 No. Dwellings with Associated Works Tremont, 33 Tower Hill, Williton, TA4 4JR (Pins Reference Number: APP/E3335/W/24/3345467) – the Appellant has responded to the Planning Inspectorate on comments from the Parish Council’s letter sent on the 16th of August 2024 following the 12th of August Extraordinary meeting.

6 REVIEW OF “PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members fully discussed the “Procedure for Review of Planning Applications” and agreed to include an additional choice within Item 8 and 9 to show “support for the application”.

Resolution:

That following the inclusion of an additional choice within Item 8 and 9 to show “support for the application” that the “Procedure for Review of Planning Applications” is adopted. Proposed by Cllr Swan and seconded by Cllr Voller. All in agreement.

7 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

- 7.1 **Grit Bins** – As requested by Highways Service Manager – Climate and Place, Somerset Council, West Area, the Clerk has checked grit levels in the four grit bins in Sampford Brett and reported back to Somerset Council to enable Highways to “top-up” as necessary.

Resolution:

That Cllrs Martin and Voller “loosen” the grit ready for use if needed. Cllr Voller to also check the Village Hall grit bin.

- 7.2 **A358 Surface Dressing issues** – Councillors felt that whilst the A358 Surface Dressing work was being undertaken the access and egress signage routes in and around the village were not adequate. Members accepted that it was for a limited period, however with more signage placed in the centre of the village, congestion in narrow lanes with no footpaths could have improved the safety of pedestrians and drivers. Members also accepted that there was limited space on the A358 to place signage but were set up by the contractors they obscured the full width of the footpath forcing pedestrians into the path of fast-moving traffic.

Resolution:

That the Clerk writes to Highways, Somerset Council to inform them of the Parish’s safety concerns which arose from the A358 Surface Dressing.

- 7.3 **Upkeep of Land Around the Bus Shelter** – Members noted that the land around the bus shelter is being very well maintained and thanked the Parishioners responsible for this excellent work.

8 TELEPHONE KIOSK/VILLAGE LIBRARY MAINTENANCE

The Grade II listed Telephone Kiosk, aka The Village Library, is an asset well used by residents directly from within the village or from the surrounding area. The Council has received quotes for its restoration with Members discussing how funding concerns can be addressed. Suggestions included local requests for grants (e.g. from Sampford Brett Activities Group) and a sponsorship project such as “sponsor a pane.”

Resolution:

That the £150 held in the budget for “Maintenance of Assets” is set against the restoration cost.

Resolution:

That the Chair and Clerk contact local organisations who may provide a grant to back the restoration, and that posters/social media is used to publicise the sponsorship project.

9 OVERGROWN HEDGES POLICY

At the request of the Minehead and Watchet Highways Subgroup the LCN circulated a template to Parish Councils to inform occupiers/owner of vegetation overhanging the footway. The template had been reviewed by the Chair and amendments made and circulated to Councillors. Members agreed the letter template as circulated subject to inclusion of further information regarding “nesting birds.”

Resolution:

That following the inclusion “to confirm no breeding birds are present prior to any cutting works...” the circulated template letter to inform occupiers/owner of vegetation overhanging the footway” is adopted. Proposed by Cllr Swan and seconded by Cllr Voller. All in agreement.

Resolution:

That implementation of the Overgrown Hedge Policy is an agenda item at the next Parish Meeting.

10 UPDATE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 10.1 Defibrillator (including maintenance and training) – Cllr S Miles** – no report of the defibrillator being used since the last Parish Council meeting. Cllr Miles to canvas demand for defibrillator training/refresher with sessions in the Autumn which will be advertised on the Parish Council Noticeboard
- 10.2 Footpaths and Rights of Ways - Cllr N Brodrick** – Cllr Brodrick is awaiting reports from the RoW Area Warden, Sarah Cresswell on the progress of the work on the erosion to the path near Aller Farm. This is a concern as the current condition is considered to be a health and safety hazard, and the footpath is part of the “Coleridge Way.” Cllr Brodrick is also awaiting clarification if the footpath from Manor Farm to Aller has had the hedgerow trimmed along the whole path.

Cllr Brodrick commented that at present communication with the RoW team is not providing any response to Parish enquiries which is a concern.

Resolution:

That Cllr Swan will raise the lack of communication from the RoW team at the next LCN.

Resolution:

That the Clerk will inform the Somerset Council Councillors of the concerns about the lack of communication from the RoW team.

- 10.3 Liaison with Village Hall Committee - Cllr S Voller** – Cllr Voller had received the minutes from the last Village Hall meeting and highlighted the proposal by the Village Hall Committee to register the village hall land with the Land Registry, as part of their process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (*currently registered under Charity number: 268277, 12th February 1981*). The Parish Council, as a Custodian Trustee, has not received notification of this. Members discussed this and raised as their main concern the need to ensure that the Village Hall site stays in perpetuity for the use of the Village. The Parish Council have asked that the Village Hall Committee to ensure that Parish Councillors are kept formally notified of their actions in their proposal to become a CIO.

Resolution:

That Cllr Voller speaks with the Village Hall Committee Chair reminding him of the request from the Parish Council that it is formally notified of their actions in their proposal to become a CIO.

Resolution:

Cllr Swan to review the Trustee agreement and circulate information to Members on land ownership.

- 10.4 Flood Warden- Cllr B Martin** – Very little precipitation over the summer, with no flood events. Despite other areas in the South West having significant rain, this area missed any localised intense rainfall. The last significant rain since May 2nd, when 24.4mm (1”) fell, was on the 5th of September when 37.6mm (1.5”) fell. The two stream gauges reflect this: extremely low level all summer, with no alerts triggered.

On Friday, 6th September, Cllr Martin reported a blocked drain outside Longcroft on the main street. Less than an hour and a half later Somerset Highways were examining the drain! Commendable. Cllr Martin spoke with the operative and it appeared to be that the recent work on the adjacent stretch of the stream has inadvertently blocked the outlet from the road drain. The blockage has not been resolved yet but is in hand.

Today Cllr Martin attended the West Somerset Flood Group (WSFG) meeting in Minehead. There was a presentation by John Buttivant, Coastal Engineer with the Environment Agency, who's presentation highlighted all the major erosion and flood issues along the West Somerset coast and the EA's ongoing plans (https://www.ccatproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/John-Buttivant_Environment-Agency.pdf). This was followed by Parishes' updates. The next meeting of the WSFG is due in January 2024.

10.5 Local Community Network (LNC) – Cllr J Swan – Cllr Swan was unable to attend the meeting on the 17 July 2024, however Cllrs Russell and Skinner represented the Parish.

Items discussed:

Better Police Engagement - The LCN meeting agreed to have a regular slot for the police at the beginning of each meeting and to have a contact list of the local PCSOs and other relevant officers. The Police also suggested using the app What3Words to pinpoint locations in rural areas.

Children and Young People - The LCN members explored the theme of provision and support for children and young people in Minehead and Watchet, especially in relation to education, employment, health, and wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing – To include as a future agenda item as it was felt to be an important topic especially given the pressures on the local health services.

Housing - There was concern about the current housing situation in West Somerset, specifically the Rainbow Way development, Minehead (*the first Council Housing in West Somerset in a generation, with 55 units*) set against the high demand for affordable homes.

Meeting Dates:

- Thursday 17 October 2024 18:30 start *West Somerset House, Williton
 - Thursday 9 January 2025 18:30 start *West Somerset House, Williton
 - Thursday 10 April 2025 18:30 start *West Somerset House, Williton
 - Wednesday 16 July 2025 (AGM) 18:30 start *West Somerset House, Williton
- *Venue to be confirmed*

11 FINANCIAL BUSINESS

11.1 Financial Reports as of 2nd September 2024

INCOME		
Brought Forward	£5,150.09	<i>Net Banked Balance as 31st March 2023</i>
Precept - Received 30 April 2024	£4,100.00	<i>AGAR Section 2 (2) – Current Gross Income</i>
	£9,250.09	
EXPENDITURE		
Staff	£300.38	<i>AGAR Section 2 (4)</i>
Other	£1,208.77	<i>AGAR Section 2 (6)</i>
	£1,509.15	<i>Current Gross Expenditure</i>
INCOME MINUS EXPENDITURE	£7,740.94	<i>Net Banked Balance as 2nd September 2024</i>
BANK RECONCILIATION		
	£7,740.94	<i>Actual bank balance</i>
Less any unrepresented cheques	£0	
Less: Petty cash float (if applicable)	£0	
Add: any un-banked cash	£0	
Net Banked Balance	£7,740.94	<i>AGAR Section 2 (8)</i>

11.2 Expenditure Category Breakdown as of 2nd September 2024

Category	Actual	Budget	Remaining	Comments
Emergency Provision	£24.99	£500.00	£475.01	Upgrade/replacement of emergency provisions
Grants	£185.00	£250.00	£65.00	Flood group website; churchyard; BickWatch
Hall Hire	£70.00	£100.00	£50.00	
Insurance	£435.82	£400.00	-£35.82	
Internal Audit	35.00	£35.00	£0.00	
Maintenance of Assets	-	£150.00	£150.00	Provision for Repairs
Membership	95.08	£95.00	-£0.08	SALC & NALC Membership
Office Equipment/Stationery	-	£50.00	£50.00	
Service Agreements	£362.88	£700.00	£337.12	Website & Dog Waste Bin
Staff Wages	£300.38	£2,838.00	£2,537.62	Pro-rata of 4hrs per week
Training	-	£120.00	£120.00	Councillors & Clerk - average £30/40 each
TOTAL	£1,509.15	£5,238.00	£3,728.85	

11.4 Schedule of Payments 2nd September 2024

No.	PO No.	Invoice No.	Payee	Description of Goods	Total	Cheque/FPO	Initial
1	PO24008	1059	SALC	Affiliation April 2024 – March 2025	£95.08	FPO	JS & SV
2	PO24013	n/a	Mrs T-A Biss	Clerk's Wages Apr-Jun 2024	£653.00	Cheque	JS & SV
Total:					£748.08		

9. NEXT PARISH MEETING – 11th December 2024

Agenda to include:

- 2025/26 Budget
- 2025/26 Precept
- Overgrown Hedges Policy
- CIO Village Hall Update

Chairman's Signature: _____

Date: _____