

WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 6th May 2025 at 7.00 pm
In the Parish Office, 2 Killick Way, Williton

Attendees:

Councillors	Payne (Chairman), Aldridge, Denton (left at 8.19pm after item 25/18), Hooper, Nye, Peeks, Rutter (left at 7.34pm after 25/07), Schmieder and Whetlor
Somerset Council	Woods (left at 7.13pm)
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	None
Press	None
Clerk	Mrs Michelle Francis
Public	None
Other	None

Apologies:

Councillors	None
Somerset Councillor	Davies
Other	None

It was advised that the meeting would be recorded.

- 25/01** Cllr Payne was unanimously elected as Chairman and duly signed the Declaration of Office
Proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Aldridge.

Cllr Payne proposed moving to item 25/17, seconded Cllr Whetlor and unanimously resolved.

25/17 Report from Somerset Councillors

Written reports had been received from Cllrs Davies and Woods and had been forwarded to members.

Cllr Woods highlighted the upcoming road works at the Wellington motorway junction; Pharmaceutical services and the response from Somerset Council regarding the sale of buildings: Williton Library, Children's Centre and Beckett House, stating if the Parish Council were interested this must be made clear.

Concern was raised as the Parish Council had not been advised which agent was selling the properties and that it appeared not to be an open process. Cllr Denton requested Cllr Woods to query the legality of selling property built with money collected through taxing residents. Clarification was requested whether the car parks and public conveniences were included, this was unknown.

This was discussed further under item 25/18

(Cllr Woods left the meeting at 7.13pm)

25/02 Conduct of Meeting including Code of Conduct and Respect for others at Meeting

The Chairman reminded members to speak only through the Chair, to respect others whilst they were speaking and

25/03 Apologies as noted above and reasons for absence approved

A resignation had been received by Cllr Angell

25/04 Declarations of Interest

Name	Agenda Item	Interest	Action
Cllr Whetlor	25/24	Other non-registrable	Advised meeting

25/05 Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Aldridge was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman, proposed Cllr Whetlor, seconded Cllr Hooper.

25/06 Appointment of Councillors to Committees and confirmation of days and dates of meetings

- 25/06.1 Cllrs Denton, Hooper and Whetlor were duly elected to the Finance and Administration Committee with Cllrs Aldridge and Payne as ex officio members.

- 25/06.2 Cllrs Nye, Peeks, Rutter and Schmieder were duly elected to the Environment and Planning Committee with Cllrs Payne and Aldridge as ex officio members. Cllr Rutter explained due to other commitments; it may not be possible to attend meetings but would when possible – this was accepted by Full Council.

- 25/06.3 Cllrs Aldridge, Denton and Whetlor were duly elected to the Personnel Committee

- 25/06.4 Members would be elected as and if necessary to the Grievance Committee

- 25/06.5 Members would be elected as and if necessary to the Appeals Committee
- 25/06.6 No member volunteered to stand on the Events Sub-Committee, one vacancy would remain. It was noted Cllrs Aldridge and Payne were ex officio members
- 25/06.7 With no members volunteering to stand on the Village Emergency Response Group, it would be added to the June Full Council agenda to consider the future of the group

Meeting dates had previously been agreed – noted

25/07 Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies

It was **resolved** to appoint representatives as follows:

Bus Users & Stakeholders Group	Aldridge
Contractor Liaison Officers	Clerk, Payne and Peeks
EDF/Hinkley Point Transport Forum	Whetlor
EDF/Hinkley Point Community Forum	Payne
Health & Safety Representative	Denton and Payne
Highway Liaison Contact	Payne and Whetlor
LCN (Local Community Network)	Payne and Whetlor
Magna Housing Association	Payne
Press Officer	Clerk
Pupil Parliament / Youth Groups	vacant
Quantock Foodbank Management Committee	Payne
Rights of Way Representatives	Peeks
SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils)	Hooper
St Decumans Charity / Mary Huxtable Trust	Whetlor
Speed Watch	Denton and Nye
Twinning Association	Aldridge
Watchet/Williton/Quantock Area Panel	Office as corresponding notification
West Somerset Flood Group	Aldridge and Payne
West Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum	Payne
Williton Library & Friends Group Officer	Office
Wyndham Charity	Payne

(Cllr Rutter left the meeting at 7.34pm)

25/08 Co-option of Councillors

Three positions were vacant and were being advertised

25/09 To re-adopt Standing Orders

Cllr Peeks proposed to reinstate the clause that the Chairman could not stand for more than four consecutive years, seconded by Cllr Hooper. It was noted this was not a statutory requirement and the position was voted on each May. A vote was taken on the proposal which failed with 2 in favour, 5 against and 1 abstention

25/10 Re-adoption of Council Policies and Procedures

	Policy	Date Adopted	Item Number
i	Code of Conduct	01/07/2024	24/93.3
ii	Financial Regulations	03/02/2025	24/274.4
iii	Anti Bullying	01/07/2024	24/93.4
iv	Audio/Visual Recording	05/08/2024	24/125.2
v	Complaints Procedure	05/08/2024	24/125.3
vi	Death of a Senior National Figure	05/08/2024	24/125.6
vii	Dignity at Work-Bullying Harassment	05/08/2024	24/125.4
viii	Employee and Councillor Privacy Notice	05/08/2024	24/125.5
ix	EPC Good Practice Code	05/08/2024	24/125.7
x	Equal Opportunity	03/06/2024	24/64.3
xi	Eye Test and Glasses	07/10/2024	24/167.3
xii	Grant Application	07/10/2024	24/167.4
xiii	IT and Electronic Communication	07/10/2024	24/167.6
xiv	Privacy Notice	05/08/2024	24/125.8
xv	Publication Scheme	07/10/2024	24/167.8
xvi	Retention & Disposal Policy	04/11/2024	24/195.3
xvii	Risk Management	03/06/2024	24/64.2

	Policy	Date Adopted	Item Number
xvii	Safe operating systems	03/02/2025	24/274.6
xviii	Safeguarding	04/11/2024	24/195.4
xix	Scheme of Delegation	04/11/2024	24/195.5
xx	Unreasonably Persistent / Vexatious	07/10/2024	24/167.9

The above policies were considered. It was noted minor changes were required on the following, which would be deferred back to FAC:

- Financial Regulations (Clerk/RFO clarification);
- Anti Bullying and Dignity at Work (similar – to look at amalgamation to one document)
- Death of a Senior National Figure (change to constituency MP)

Resolution: To propose all other policies were considered together, as all had been reviewed within the last 12 months, and be considered on a rolling system.

Proposed Cllr Payne, seconded by Cllr Whetlor and **resolved** with 2 abstentions.

25/11 Insurance Renewal

Quotations were being sought

25/12 Schedule of Meetings – noted as agreed

25/13 Deeds in the custody of the Parish Council

It was noted copies of deeds were held at the Solicitors. This would be checked by the Chairman and Clerk, as the ongoing clarification, along with checking of registered land.

25/14 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th April 2025

It was unanimously **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting.

Proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Nye, with three abstentions due to absence.

Cllr Whetlor stated disappointment that there had been no proposal to accept the apologies given

25/15 Matters from the Minutes – for the purpose of report only

A discussion took place after Cllr Peeks stated the wrong decision had been made regarding the approval of the Royal British Legion commemorative plaque being placed in the Memorial Shelter. As clarification of ownership continued, it was resolved to move if found to be incorrect. Proposed Cllr Payne, seconded Cllr Whetlor with one abstention

25/16 Report from Avon and Somerset Constabulary

The recent newsletter that had been forwarded was noted

25/17 Report from Somerset Councillors – this item had been moved up the agenda and discussed

25/18 Clerk's/Chairman's Notices

Rachel Gilmour MP office had requested a meeting with the Parish Council and Somerset Council to discuss the proposed sale of Williton Library, Children's Centre and Beckett House – noted. Cllr Denton requested clarification be sought on assets sold in Birmingham which had possibly not cleared the outstanding loan.

Resolution: To submit an Expression of Interest to Somerset Council Assets and officers regarding the sale of Williton buildings and to further ask with disposal of portfolios if the council would be left with any outstanding loan commitments.

Proposed Cllr Whetlor, seconded by Cllr Hooper

An invitation had been received from Atwest to attend a celebration to mark 20 years of the founding of Atwest on 25th May 2025. The Chairman advised he would be unable to attend, members were asked to advise the Clerk if anyone was able to accept the invitation, otherwise, apologies would be submitted.

Cllr Denton left the meeting

25/19 Correspondence

25/19.1 It was **resolved** to note the contents of the correspondence log

25/20 Report from the Environment and Planning Committee held on 14th April 2025

It was **resolved** to note the report

25/21 Report from the Finance and Administration Committee held on 28th April 2025

It was **resolved** to note the report

25/21.1 It was **resolved** to note the provisions as at 31st March 2025.

25/21.2 It was resolved to note the Receipts and Expenditure Analysis as at 31st March 2025

25/22 AGAR

This was due to be sent to the Internal Auditor

25/23 Report from the Events Sub Committee held on 9th April 2025

It was **resolved** to note the report

The lighting of the Beacon for the D-Day commemoration on Thursday 6th June 2024 was noted, starting with the Sampford Brett Singers at 9pm, with beacon lighting at 9.30pm.

Flags had been displayed, and positive comments had been received

25/24 To receive accounts for payment not covered by Finance and Admin Committee

It was **resolved** to pay the following invoices. Proposed Cllr Peeks, seconded Cllr Hooper (Cllr Whetlor abstained on SALC payment only)

Date	Details	Cheque No.	Invoice No.	Total Bank £	Cash £	VAT £
06/05/2025	Aurora FE Ltd 6625 Care in the Community	4573	50015858	202.98		0.00
06/05/2025	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance 4560 SC Ground Maintenance	4574	629647	468.28		78.05
06/05/2025	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance 4555 WPC Ground Maintenance	4574	629210	1,389.31		231.55
06/05/2025	Enhanced Group 4505 Printing and Stationery	4575	2282	70.60		11.77
06/05/2025	M Francis 4610 Microsoft licence	4576	7782f474nc5	104.99		0.00
06/05/2025	Lyreco Uk Ltd 4205 Printing & Stationery	4577	6290335254	165.59		27.60
06/05/2025	SALC 6105 Affiliation Fees	4578	1969	1,188.80		0.00
06/05/2025	Somerset Council Business Rates 4590 Rates on Workshop	4579	Workshop	1,796.40		0.00
06/05/2025	Somerset Council Business Rates 4340 Rates on Parish Office	4580	Office	2,594.80		0.00

25/25 Health and Safety

A Safe Operating Procedure had been written and agreed by Health and Safety advisors, for the distributors of the newsletter

25/26 Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 22nd April 2025

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the evening, noting it was unfortunate not many parishioners had attended

25/27 Community Speed Watch

No Report

25/28 Community Review Project

No Report

25/29 Local Community Network

The draft minutes had been forwarded and noted

Cllr Whetlor gave a verbal report on the recent Teams meeting regarding the closure of B3191, Cleeve Hill, Watchet and that it may have been closed under the wrong order. Chairman of local parishes would meet to discuss submitting a joint letter to Somerset Council Highways

25/30 Flood / Village Response Group

The future of the group would be considered at the June meeting

25/31 Parish Newsletter and Advertiser

The next edition of the newsletter would be produced

Cllr Nye had contacted the publication The Advertiser regarding the possibility of including articles and events in Williton. After a discussion it was agreed the Clerk would request further details, including costings for 2 pages within the publication, how and where the brochure is distributed, and clarification if events could be submitted and included free of charge.

25/32 Matters for the next Parish Council meeting to be held on Monday 2nd June 2025

Signs on A358 to Stogumber Post Office and shop (Cllr Aldridge)

Meeting closed at 8.57 pm

Signed as a true and correct record Cllr Payne Dated 2nd June 2025