

WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th January 2026 at 7.00 pm
In the Parish Office, 2 Killick Way, Williton

Attendees:

Councillors	Payne (Chairman), Aldridge, Gatti, Hooper, Prince, Rutter, Shattock, Vaughan and Whetlor
Somerset Council	None
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	None
Press	None
Clerk	Mrs Michelle Francis
Public	Two members (left after item 25/240.1)
Other	None

Apologies:

Councillors	Denton and Peaks (Personal reasons)
Somerset Councillor	Davies (as not being his turn this month)
Other	None

25/236 It was advised that the meeting would be recorded and members were reminded of Code of Conduct and respect for others during the meeting

25/237 **Apologies as noted above and reasons for absence approved**

25/238 **Co-option of Councillors and Allocation of new councillors to committees**

An application had been received by Tony Prince for the casual vacancy on the Council. After a proposal from Cllr Aldridge, seconded by Cllr Gatti, it was unanimously **resolved** to co-opt Tony Prince to the Council.

As Cllr Prince was in attendance, he duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance, after which he was able to take part in the remainder of the meeting

Cllr Prince would attend both the EPC and FAC meetings before a decision on which committee he would stand on.

An application had been received by William Vaughan for the casual vacancy on the Council. After a proposal from Cllr Hooper, seconded by Cllr Aldridge, it was **resolved**, with 2 against and 2 abstentions, to co-opt William Vaughan to the Council.

As Cllr Vaughan was in attendance, he duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance, after which he was able to take part in the remainder of the meeting

Cllr Vaughan was voted onto the FAC committee, proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Aldridge, with one abstention

25/239 **Declarations of Interest**

Name	Agenda Item	Interest	Action
Cllr Whetlor	25/240	Other, non-pecuniary	Left meeting, as a resident of Watchet and potential impact on precept
Cllr Aldridge	25/240	Other, non-pecuniary	Advised meeting of a family member buried in the closed churchyard

25/240 **Watchet Town Council to address members regarding decision on Watchet Closed Churchyard funding**

(Cllr Whetlor left the meeting for this item at 7.07pm)

Cllr Irvine and the Town Clerk attended as representatives of Watchet Town Council and addressed members, with the request that Williton Parish Council contribute 50% towards the running costs of the closed churchyard, and highlighted historical information.

The following were the main points raised:

- Under S137, states a council cannot precept for general work of another local authority, therefore, no route to pay 50% via the precept, this was why £1,000.00 has been donated yearly from reserves, if available.

- Williton Parish Council had formally withdrawn from proposed arrangement in 1996, noting no formal arrangement had been entered into.
 - The high percentage of hours on the maintenance, being 18 per week, was queried, particularly during last summer's heatwave
 - Wage costs provided were inconsistent, with three different figures given
 - Inconsistency regarding Service Level Agreement
 - Watchet Town Council should present set figures, consider enhancement and biodiversity in area and confirmation of burial fees.
- 25/240.1 Members were asked if they wished to consider any response or amendments to their previous resolution, to donate the sum of £1,000.00 for the financial year 2026-2027.
- **Resolution** – No amendment to be made to the previous resolution, to donate £1,000.00 for the financial year 2026-2027
Proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Vaughan, **resolved** with one against
 - **Resolution** – to investigate if funding could be made under S137 and if found to be possible, to set up a joint working group with Watchet Town Council, Williton Parish Council and Watchet St Decuman Parochial Church Council to discuss management of the closed churchyard and investigate ways to enhance and optimise biodiversity, for future years
Proposed Cllr Aldridge, seconded Cllr Vaughan, unanimously **resolved**
- (Cllr Whetlor rejoined the meeting at 7.55pm)*
- 25/241 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st December 2025**
- It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting.
Proposed Cllr Aldridge, seconded Cllr Hooper, with three abstentions due to absence
- 25/242 Matters from the Minutes – for the purpose of report only**
- There were none
- 25/243 Report from Avon and Somerset Constabulary**
- The recent newsletter had been circulated – noted.
- Confirmation of Crime statistics had been received, that out of the 33 Violence Against the Person reported in the November newsletter, 11 had occurred within the Williton parish
- It was noted a lot of vandalism had occurred over recent week, including damage to the SID device on Long Street and the light bollards around the Memorial Ground. Members were requested to report any incidents to the police
- 25/244 Report from Somerset Councillors**
- Cllr Davies and supplied press releases and had printed for distribution 'Somerset Council welcomes progress on Auditors' recommendations' and 'Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) – now extended'.
- Cllr Davies advised he had contacted Highways regarding the sunken manhole near the Tropiquaria roundabout on the A39 and had been advised BT Openreach were responsible and highways would treat this as urgent – no further update had been received
- Cllr Aldridge advised that he had recently been unable to access the school by vehicle, due to contractors, undertaking work on Doniford Road, obstructing the entrances. He expressed concern about the impact this could have on emergency vehicle access. This matter would be relayed to both Somerset Councillors
- 25/245 Clerk's/Chairman's Notices**
- Training events and dates had been received from SALC
- Further information regarding election costs had been received, advising there would be a small charge to town and parish councils for preparatory work on the elections where the poll was due to be held but is not being contested, to cover the preparation and publication of notices, processing of nominations and other costs incurred - Cllr Whetlor advised SALC were seeking definitive costs
- 25/246 Correspondence**
- 25/246.1 It was **resolved** to note the contents of the correspondence log
- 25/246.2 A letter from the Leader of Somerset Council: Reflections and Updates, had been received and forwarded to members - noted

25/247 Report from the Environment and Planning Committee

There was no report this month

25/248 Report from the Finance and Administration Committee

There was no report this month

25/249 Report from the Events Sub Committee

There was no report this month

The Chairman advised the Santa's Grotto held in the Parish Office on Wednesday 10th December, had been well received

25/250 To receive accounts for payment

It was unanimously **resolved** to pay the following invoices. Proposed Cllr Gatti, seconded Cllr Hooper

Date	Details	Cheque No.	Invoice No.	Total Bank £	Cash £	VAT £
05/01/2026	Castle Home Improvements 6510 Building Maintenance	4771	20772	10,740.00		1,700.00
05/01/2026	Core Synergy Ltd 4605 Website	4772	18247	12.00		2.00
05/01/2026	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance 4555 WPC Ground Maintenance	4773	668745	1,389.31		231.55
05/01/2026	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance 4560 SC Ground Maintenance	4773	668039	468.28		78.05
05/01/2026	Danfo UK Ltd 4590 Cleaning Public Conveniences	4774	482	1,102.66		183.78
05/01/2026	Enhanced Group 4505 Printing and Stationery	4775	2858	39.31		6.55
05/01/2026	Lyreco UK Ltd 4505 Printing and Stationery	4776	6290352777	51.00		8.50
05/01/2026	N Ridge 4510 Office Cleaning	4777	61	150.70		0.00
05/01/2026	WWMRG – Talking Café Room Hire 6625 Care in the Community	4778	233/25-26	76.00		0.00
05/01/2026	WWMRG – Youth Club Room Hire 6635 Youth Provision	4778	239/25-26	126.00		0.00
05/01/2026	WWMRG – Foxes Lunches Room Hire 6625 Care in the Community	4778	235/25-26	237.00		0.00
05/01/2026	WWMRG – Afternoon Tea Room Hire 6625 Care in the Community	4779	244/2526	191.50		0.00
05/01/2026	WWMRG – Remembrance Room Hire 6625 Care in the Community	4779	228/25-26	19.00		0.00

25/251 Final Budget and Precept 2026 - 2027

Budget - No amendments were made to the budget that had been presented

- **Resolution:** To accept the presented budget of £252,758.46
Proposed by Cllr Hooper, seconded by Cllr Whetlor, **resolved** with one abstention

Precept – Notification had been received from Somerset Council that the tax base had increased to 1,069.49 (5.57%). Members had been presented with varying options of precept levels. It was unanimously **resolved** to request a precept of £214,000.00 using reserves to fund the remainder of the budget. This would see an increase of 3.95% equating to £200.10 (from £192.49) based on a Band D property.

- **Resolution:** To request a precept of £214,000.00
Proposed by Cllr Vaughan, seconded by Cllr Aldridge, **resolved** with one abstention

The precept form would be duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk *Action: Chairman and Clerk*

25/252 Health and Safety

A company had been contacted regarding the water supply into the Parish Office, as reported at FAC and would be inspected shortly

The new bay windows had been installed in the Parish Office early in the day – it was noted the door threshold was high – this would be reported when the fitters returned the next day

25/253 Community Speed Watch

There was no report

25/254 Local Community Network

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 8th January 2026

25/255 Purchase of the Old Library Building, Killick Way, Williton and receive any further update

Somerset Council had replied regarding clause 9 of the Heads of Terms, stating: *I've considered your request and propose to stick with use class F, but alongside this I will provide the PC with a letter of assurance that the use/operation of the site as suggested in your email would not be considered a breach by the Council. This assurance would be personal to the PC and not to be relied upon my future owners of the property.* The Heads of Terms would be amended to reflect this.

- **Resolution:** To agree and sign the amended Heads of Terms upon receipt
Proposed Cllr Payne, seconded Cllr Hooper, with one against

25/256 Matters for the next Parish Council meeting to be held on Monday 2nd February 2026

Meeting closed at 8.38pm

Signed as a true and correct record Cllr Payne Dated 2nd February 2026