

Hinton St George Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th July 2026, at St. George's Village Hall, Hinton St. George.

Present: Cllr F. Voss, Cllr P. Lanham, Cllr A. Barber and Cllr E. Way. Somerset Council was represented by Cllr Adam Dance MP and Cllr Steve Ashton, and the Clerk was in attendance.

Members of the Public: 6

1247. Public Forum: A member of the public presented context around the planning application for the extension at 2 Hinton Close, noting that this was to accommodate their growing family and enable them to remain in the village. They also noted that neighbours had been consulted prior to the planning application being sought and that everything was being done to ensure that the extension aligned with the aesthetics of the village.

1248. Apologies for Absence: Cllr M. Herbert (personal)

1249. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Voss declared an interest in the Hinton Close planning application, as he is a close neighbour of the property.

1250. Minutes of last Meeting: The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Monday 15th June 2026 were approved by all present Councillors and signed by the Chair.

1251. Co-option to Council: The Chair expressed her thanks to the three candidates who had submitted written applications for the two vacancies, noting that they were all very good candidates, which would make the decision-making process difficult. The Chair encouraged the candidate who was not selected to put themselves forward for the elections in May 2027. The Chair noted that applicant Ian Yorston was travelling and unavailable to attend in person, but the council accepted his written application and a short verbal presentation from him via telephone link. The other two candidates present (Vince Blocke and Rob Haggerty) each gave a brief presentation to the council outlining their background and reasons for applying, with Councillors having the opportunity to ask questions. No Councillors apart from the Chair took up this opportunity. Having fully considered all three written applications and presentations, the Chair nominated Rob Haggerty and Ian Yorston to fill the two council vacancies, which was seconded by Cllr Lanham. The Chair asked Cllrs Barber and Voss whether they wished to nominate anyone else, which they did not. Following general consensus, it was resolved to co-opt Rob Haggerty and Ian Yorston to the Council.

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1252. Election of Vice Chair: The Chair noted the need to appoint a new Vice Chair, following her recent appointment as Chair. The Chair nominated Cllr Lanham for the role of Vice Chair and Cllr Barber seconded this with no objections noted. Cllr Lanham was elected Vice Chair and signed the acceptance of office as Vice Chair.

1253. Somerset Councillor Report: Cllr Ashton reported on the consultation process for the Somerset Council Local Plan, noting the importance of the revised mechanism to address planning concerns, which includes a threshold of 10 house developments going straight to planning officers for decisions, and the 21-day response time on planning applications being unlikely to be extended. Cllr Ashton reported on the Best Value notification for Somerset Council, indicating that they are felt to be not moving fast enough with the merger of district councils. Cllr Ashton noted that he would be chairing the committee to allocate the £50m funding to reduce flooding, and encouraged the submission of funding applications. Cllr Dance provided an update on his 2 years as MP, noting the Leonardo contract which would bring £10m to Yeovil College; the opening of new NHS dentists in Crewkerne and Chard and a collaboration with Magic Dentistry to provide dental education and support for school children; the reopening of the Yeovil maternity unit; plans for a permanent banking hub in Crewkerne; and work on a neurodiversity bill to identify and address concerns earlier in childhood. Cllr Dance will continue to hold regular forums with residents to get their feedback.

1254. Clerk's Updates:

a) To provide alternative banking options - The Clerk presented feedback on the interest earned on current Barclays accounts, as well as alternative banking options for consideration. The Clerk noted that Unity Trust, which is tailored for councils, would come with a monthly service fee (currently free) however the savings interest rates are higher and the customer support seems to be better. It was agreed that the council would move their banking to Unity Trust but that the decision on signatories would only be taken in the September meeting.

b) To provide an update on the external audit process - The Clerk confirmed that questions had been received from the external auditor which are currently being addressed.

c) To provide an update on building at Lower Niddons - The Clerk reported that Mr Lewin has appointed a specialist equine planning consultancy to review the Lower Niddons works and provide a report setting out where they stand with regard to the barn and applicable planning regulations. Mr Lewin intends to provide a copy of the report to the council. No further action is required at this time.

d) To propose next steps on the proposed emergency plan - The Clerk plans to set up a meeting with interested parties to engage around the proposed emergency plan, and aims to have a first draft in place by October.

1255. Highways and Footpath updates:

a) To receive an update on SID results - The Clerk reported that the average speed recorded was 20.9mph, with a top speed of 45mph recorded at 16:44 on 17 June. The total number of vehicles monitored during the period 6 June to 16 July was 11,240.

b) To discuss replacing the Springfield dog waste bin post - The Clerk confirmed that she

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had continued to request Somerset Council attend to this but was still awaiting feedback. Cllr Dance noted that other councils were emptying dog waste bins themselves and recommended that the council conduct this repair as a compromise. It was agreed that the council will cover the cost of the Lengthsman repairing the post.

c) To discuss repairing the stiles at Crimbleford Knap and near the dam (beyond Oak Field) - Approval was given to repair the stile beyond Oak Field. The Crimbleford Knap landowner will be engaged on whether the stile should rather be left open or replaced by a gate.

c) To discuss Chapter 8 storage options - The Clerk reported that the shed at St George's Hall was not available as it was fully utilised, and the church barn option was not an option for the Lengthsman who would not be able to park close enough for unloading equipment. The Clerk will investigate whether the council could purchase a storage shed to be placed next to the outdoor storage area at St George's Hall.

1256. Planning applications under review:

a) 26/01396/HOU at The Old Malthouse, High Street, Hinton St George, TA17 8SE -

Application for the erection of a single storey rear extension and renovation works -

Approved following a site visit with a note to consider the necessity of the wall linking what is now two separate blocks of buildings and separately its height as it is visible from the street.

b) 26/01351/HOU at 2 Hinton Close, Hinton St, George, TA17 8SH - Two-storey front extension and single-storey side extension to dwelling - **Approved following a site visit.**

c) 26/01502/LBC at End Cottage, Church Street, Hinton St George, TA17 8SP -

Application to remove cement-based mortar to the south-west and north-west elevations and repoint with a lime-based mortar - **Approved.**

d) Decisions to note:

i) 26/00494/FUL at Hinton St George Pre-School, West Street, Hinton St George, TA17 8SA - amended plans for the replacement of an existing treated timber picket fencing and installation of a 1.8m high sand colour railings fence - **Approved.**

ii) 26/01504/TCA at the Coach House, Merriott Road, Hinton St George, TA17 8SL - notification provided about tree surgery works to 3 trees within a Conservation Area.

1257. Conservation and village matters

a) To provide an update on the Conservation Appraisal process - Cllr Way reported that the Parish Council was still waiting for the final corrected documents and expressed regret for the further delay. It is hoped this will be available soon.

Cllrs Dance and Ashton left the meeting.

b) To provide an update on the Green St defibrillator electricity solutions - Cllr Barber reported on correspondence with SSE regarding the proposed fee and noted that this had been referred to the Energy Ombudsman, with feedback pending. It was noted that solar options would not be feasible, however Cllr Barber will engage with the property owners behind the defibrillator to consider an alternative option.

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c) To provide an update on the planned AED defibrillator training - Cllr Barber reported on the marketing efforts for the training, to be held at 10:30 for 11:00 on Saturday 15th August in St George's Hall with refreshments to be provided. Approval was given for a flyer to be distributed with the Hinton Hound, with the Clerk noting that a discount would be received as this would be included in the council's sponsorship fee. The Chair encouraged Councillors who hadn't yet attended defibrillator training to do so.

d) To approve the Hinton Hound article - Councillors confirmed there were no changes to the draft copy for July and this was approved.

1258. Finance and Procedure

a) To appoint a Councillor to undertake quarterly checks of the Parish Council Accounts for 2026-27 - the Chair proposed that this be held over to the next meeting when the new Councillors were present. All Councillors were in agreement with this.

b) Review of the Receipts and Payments and verify bank reconciliations - the Clerk proposed that the first quarter report be held over for consideration as part of the quarterly checks, which was agreed to.

c) Invoices for payment to be considered and approved by Councillors prior to payment - Councillors approved the following payments:

SSE - £14.08

Home & Garden Services - £122.58

St George's Hall (defibrillator training) - £33.00

St George's Hall (meetings) - £99.00

St George's Churchyard - £500.00

J Chant (expense reimbursement) - £69.99

A Barber (expense reimbursement) - £20.00

Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance - £50.00

HMRC - £192.80

Clerk's Salary - £289.71

Clerk's Reimbursement - £181.82

Parish Magazine Printing - £162.18

d) To approve banking options and agree next steps - It was agreed that the council would move their banking to Unity Trust. The Clerk will prepare the necessary documentation for consideration in the next meeting.

e) To approve additional banking signatories - It was agreed that the decision on signatories would only be taken in the September meeting.

f) To review and approve the defibrillator electricity solution - It was noted that there would be a notice period with SSE but that once the Ombudsman feedback had been received, the Clerk had a mandate to close the SSE contract.

1259. To receive Parish Councillors reports:

Cllr Voss - noted that he had arranged for the Merriott Rd verges to be cleared to improve road visibility.

Cllr Barber - noted that he had reported a large pothole in Pit Road, for the 2nd time. Cllr Barber also noted an increase in short power cuts in the village. The Clerk was requested to ask Western Power for more information in this regard.

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Cllr Lanham - noted that he had received a number of queries about the mobile signal in the village. The Clerk will follow-up with local providers.

Cllr Way - noted the ongoing concerns about the ABRI car park, noting that a resident had been assaulted after engaging with the person concerned. Cllr Dance's office are continuing to liaise with ABRI regarding the ongoing legal process and the council will continue to follow-up in this regard.

1260. To note correspondence received – The Clerk noted correspondence from Wessex Internet regarding access for laying cables, and from Somerset Council noting that Councillor address details are no longer required to be provided on websites.

1261. Items for next Agenda – No agenda items were noted.

1262. Next meeting date: The next meeting will be held on Monday 21st September 2026 at 7.15 pm in St George's Hall, Hinton St George.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm.

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