

Hinton St George Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19th October 2026, at St. George's Village Hall, Hinton St. George.

Present: Cllr E. Way, Cllr F. Voss, Cllr A. Barber and Cllr M. Herbert. Somerset Council was represented by Cllr Steve Ashton, and the Clerk was in attendance.

Members of the Public: 44

1279. Public Forum: Ten members of the public spoke in objection to the proposed 1-way road system. The following points were noted:

- It would be likely to increase speeds, with a greater likelihood of accidents, and the increased 2-mile round trip would create challenges for cyclists, horse-riders, motor scooters, pedestrians
- The proposed route may create access challenges and delays for emergency services
- Farmers and those driving tractors, farm machinery or large delivery vehicles would face access/turning challenges with the proposed route, possibly creating more traffic challenges in the village and risks to drivers
- The increased length in journeys for those doing regular trips out of the village (including parents, workers etc) would increase time, travel costs and would not be environmentally beneficial.

The Chair noted that the agenda item for the proposed 1-way road system would be moved earlier to address the concerns raised in the Public Forum.

1280. Apologies for Absence: Cllr P. Lanham (personal), Cllr R. Haggerty (personal), Cllr I. Yorston (personal).

1281. Declarations of Interest: None.

1282. Minutes of last Meeting: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2026 were approved by all present Councillors and signed by the Chair.

1283. Somerset Councillor Report: Cllr Ashton noted that the cost of the proposed one-way road system would have to be borne by the Parish Council and would be too expensive for the Parish Council to implement, and that in his experience, similar solutions usually resulted in increased speeds. After meeting with DEFRA, he was able to confirm that the likelihood of our water reservoirs reaching Day Zero is still low. He noted that discussions are ongoing around council tax deductions linked to benefits, and that flood alleviation funding proposals are being considered, with the option for councils to still submit applications.

Cllr Ashton noted that Cllr Jo Roundell Greene would be returning in November. The Chair

Hinton St. George Parish Council

October 2026

Signed

Date

thanked Cllr Ashton for his support in the past few months.

1284. To discuss the proposed 1-way road system.

The Chair noted that the proposer of the 1-way road system was not in attendance, but that an updated written proposal had been submitted to the Parish Council. Written objections had been received from 17 members of the public prior to the meeting, providing valuable feedback.

No Councillors were in favour of supporting the motion for a 1-way road system. The Chair confirmed that the proposal would not be considered further.

(To ensure full transparency, a copy of the proposal and a summary of the written objections received will be attached to these minutes as Appendix A).

1285. Clerk's Updates:

a) To present an update on the banking options - The Clerk confirmed that the Unity Trust bank application has been submitted with account approval taking up to 4 weeks. The application has been submitted with just 3 Councillors included and the rest will be added once the account is approved.

b) To provide an update on the proposed yellow lines - With regards to the proposal to introduce new parking restrictions in Hinton St George, Highways have confirmed that the Parking Amendment Order has been drafted for various sites across South Somerset, and the Clerk should receive a copy in the near future, as part of the formal statutory consultation process.

c) To confirm details of the Emergency Planning meeting - The Emergency Planning meeting will take place on Saturday 21st November at St George's Hall, with people asked to arrive at 10:15 for a prompt 10:30 start, ending at 12:30. The meeting is open to all residents and the Clerk confirmed that invitations would be extended to those who indicated their interest at the defibrillator training, as well as St George's Church, St George's Hall, the school, Our Shop, Lord Poulett Arms and street WhatsApp Groups. During the meeting, attendees will divide into working groups to discuss different topics (e.g. risk assessment, local skills & resources, places of safety, communication channels) and will discuss in the full group so everyone has the chance to contribute. Somerset Prepared will then be asked to evaluate the draft Emergency Plan before it is finalised.

d) To present the draft Co-Option Policy - The Clerk presented a draft Co-Option Policy which outlines the procedure to be followed when a casual vacancy has arisen and an election has not been called for, at which time the Council can co-opt a new Councillor. The policy covers all aspects including eligibility criteria, the co-option process from advertising to election, and completion of the process.

e) To present proposed changes to the Financial Regulations - The Clerk proposed changes to address the gap recently identified of how payments can be approved between Parish Council meetings. The changes confirm that:

- The Clerk plus Chairperson can approve items below £200
- The Clerk plus Chairperson with approval of 2 additional Councillors can approve items above £200 but below £500 (NEW)
- The Council must approve all items over £500

- The approvals must be confirmed in writing and noted as an expense item at the next Parish Council meeting (NEW)

f) To present the draft copy for Hinton Hound (October magazine) - The Clerk circulated the draft copy of the Hinton Hound article covering the Emergency Planning Session, the Conservation Area Appraisal update and Parish Council budgets.

g) To discuss the use of Parish Council email addresses - The Clerk confirmed that using personal email accounts for council business created a number of risks to both Councillors and the Parish Council including the following:

- Under the latest JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance) rules, if Councillors do not use official, council-owned email addresses, the Parish Council will be legally required to declare a governance failure on the Annual Return (AGAR).
- Under the Freedom of Information and GDPR laws, any email concerning council business is legally subject to public disclosure. An official email account acts as a legal shield for Councillors which keeps their private emails entirely separate.
- Data protection concerns could arise if a Councillor's personal email is compromised.

Based on the risks noted, it was agreed that all Councillors would move to Parish Council email addresses (cllrname@hintonstgeorgeparishcouncil.gov.uk), which the Clerk will set up.

h) To confirm parish council meeting dates for the 2027-28 financial year - After considering the proposed meeting dates in conjunction with public holidays and school terms, it was agreed to continue with the third Monday of the month. The following meeting dates were confirmed for 2027-28:

- 19 April 2027
- 17 May 2027
- 21 June 2027
- 19 July 2027
- 20 September 2027
- 18 October 2027
- 15 November 2027
- 17 January 2028
- 21 February 2028
- 20 March 2028

As in previous years, there will be no planned meetings in August or December 2027.

1286. Highways and Footpath updates:

a) To receive an update on SID results - The Clerk reported on the period 13 September to 15 October 2026, noting that the average speed recorded was 20.6mph, with a top speed of 45mph recorded at 01:23 on 15 September. The total number of vehicles monitored during the period was 11,406. It was asked whether the SID screen could include a "Thank You" message seen in other villages, which the Clerk will investigate.

b) To discuss the stolen Chapter 8 signage - The Clerk reported that two traffic cones and two road signs had been stolen while the Lengthsman was using them in New Road. As we have no proof of the incident, this was not reported, however the Lengthsman is considering how to mark all signage to deter further thefts. The road signs have been replaced at a cost of £49, which is below the Council's excess for outside equipment (£100).

Cllr Voss reported that the area around Church path had been trimmed to ensure that it was

Hinton St. George Parish Council

October 2026

Signed

Date

accessible. He noted that the stone path in Church Street would be pressure washed to avoid further falls, but it was noted that residents would be asked to keep outside gardens cut or staked back next year to keep the path clear for pedestrians.

Cllr Voss and Cllr Herbert both noted that dog waste had been reported on pavements. The Clerk was asked to present appropriate signs encouraging dog owners to pick up after their dogs and request that they are not off-lead within the village.

c) To discuss New Road Ash trees needing attention - It was agreed that the Clerk would attempt to contact the trust managing the relevant property and request that they attend to this matter.

1287. Planning applications under review:

a) 26/02340/HOU at 2 Hinton Close, TA17 8SH - single-storey front extension and single-storey side extension - The amendment to the approved renovations was considered and approved.

Decisions to note: None

1288. Conservation and village matters

a) To provide an update on the Conservation Appraisal process - The Chair confirmed that the Parish Council is ready to release the draft Conservation Appraisal, however approval was still awaited from Somerset Council on the proposed review process, as they are using Hinton St George as a test case to establish a new protocol for other villages wishing to follow a similar Conservation Area Appraisal process.

b) To discuss village lighting - The Chair noted that the village lighting maintenance programme had been agreed and requested that this be continued. The Clerk will obtain updated quotes to ensure these are still within budget, before proceeding with the maintenance of 2-3 lights.

c) To discuss the playground maintenance and repairs - The Clerk reported that St George's Hall have had to remove 3 items of equipment this year and after completing repairs and maintenance, they are awaiting an updated playground safety inspection report from Somerset Council. This will give an indication of whether any further repairs or replacements are needed. The Clerk was able to confirm details of how the Parish Council had assisted with the playground purchases in 2012. It was agreed that further discussions would take place once St George's Hall has clarity on the support they will be needing.

d) To provide an update on the recent community policing discussions - No further updates have been received from Abri regarding the proposed barrier to protect the Green Street parking area.

e) To consider being a co-signatory to Hinton Hound volunteering article - All Councillors confirmed their support for this article.

1289. Finance and Procedure

a) To review the Receipts and Payments schedule and verify bank reconciliations - this information was provided to all Councillors for review.

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

- SSE - £0.00 (Charge of £47.44 offset against credit received)

Hinton St. George Parish Council

October 2026

Signed

Date

- St George's Hall - £66.00
- Home & Garden Services - £1,854.05
- HMRC - £170.80
- Clerk's Salary - £256.34
- Clerk's Reimbursement - £191.66
- Poppy Appeal - £75.00
- Yarcombe Woodland Products - £27.20
- Somerset Council - £35.00
- Cllr Yorston Reimbursement - £19.15

c) To review the Q2 Financial Report - The Clerk highlighted key aspects of the Q2 financial report (which is available on the website), including:

- The appointment of Paul Lanham as Vice Chair and the co-option of Ian Yorston and Rob Haggerty to the Council
- The CPR and Defibrillator Training session which over 60 people attended
- SSE gave the Parish Council a goodwill credit of £248.99 to offset the increase in rates for the Green St defibrillator, and hope to provide a longer-term solution
- The External Auditor's clear report and certificate was published on 11 September, with the Clerk confirming that a new Internal Auditor will be appointed, and noting that the amendment made to the 2024/25 comparative figures on the AGAR submission did not impact the final balance carried forward to 2026/27.
- All income for the financial year has been received as planned, and aside from the external audit cost which was not budgeted for, all costs remain in line with the budget and our forecast remains under budget.
- After researching banking alternatives, it was agreed to proceed with opening a banking facility at Unity Trust which is in progress, and it was resolved that all Councillors will be appointed as authorised signatories.

d) To discuss the first draft budget for 2027-28 - The Clerk presented the draft budget for 2027-28, noting that this was based on the forecast actuals for 2026-27, as well as the and 3-year compliance budget. Councillors requested that provision be made to maintain the Pelota Wall and the Village Cross and that further budget be added to continue the village lighting maintenance. The Clerk will prepare and updated version for further discussion at the next meeting.

e) To approve the Co-Option Policy - Approved (proposed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr Herbert).

f) To approve the amended Financial Regulations - Approved by all Councillors.

g) To approve the Hinton Hound articles for October - Approved by all Councillors.

1290. To receive Parish Councillors reports:

Cllr Voss - Thanked everyone who had provided support in ensuring the removal of the caravan occupant from the Abri parking lot in Green Street. This was endorsed by the Chair.

Cllr Barber - After travelling to areas where defibrillators are uncommon, Cllr Barber noted how important defibrillators are in potentially saving lives.

Cllr Herbert - Reported on the recent Reading Room Trust meeting, noting that residents had been asked to support St George's Hall to secure funding to maintain the hall.

Cllr Way - Apologised that she would be unable to attend the Remembrance Sunday wreath

Hinton St. George Parish Council

October 2026

Signed

Date

laying ceremony as she was travelling. Cllr Voss confirmed that he would represent the Parish Council at this ceremony.

1291. To note correspondence received – The Clerk noted that correspondence received relating to the proposed 1-way road system had been shared with the Councillors in preparation for this meeting.

1292. Items for next Agenda – The following agenda items were noted for the next meeting:

- Village Lighting
- The need for an HR Committee

1293. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED: That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

a) Staffing and Contractual Matters

The Clerk left the room for this item of business. Upon returning, it was confirmed to the Clerk that the Council had **RESOLVED** to grant a 3.3% salary increase in line with the NALC Pay Settlement (issued 24 August 2026), back-dated to 1 April 2026.

b) Proposed Offer of Land

Councillors discussed a potential offer of land, including its location, potential community uses, and broad funding options.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council continue to explore this option, with all details remaining confidential at the request of the seller.

1294. Next meeting date: The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th November 2026 at 7.15 pm in St George's Hall, Hinton St George.

The meeting ended at 8.52pm.

Hinton St. George Parish Council

October 2026

Signed

Date