

MINUTES OF HAMBRIDGE AND WESTPORT PARISH COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th JUNE 2025
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, HAMBRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

25/1280 PRESENT:

Cllr. R Maidment (Acting Chair), Cllr. S. Denley, Cllr. P. Masters, Cllr G. Hill (via Teams) & Mrs. L. Brooks (Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

25/1281 APOLOGIES:

Cllr. R Meecham (Chairman),
Somerset Cllr. Jo Roundell-Greene

25/1282 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Nothing to report

25/1283 MINUTES:

The Minutes from the May meeting had been circulated. It was agreed to be an accurate account of the meeting and signed.

Proposed: Cllr. P Masters

Seconded: Cllr. S Denley

Agreed unanimously.

25/1284 PUBLIC TIME

25/1284 Public Time:

Nothing to report

25/1284/b Unitary Councillor report:

No County Councillor was present at the meeting. A report has been received and forwarded to all Parish Councillors. Included in the report it mentioned that Somerset Council is implementing changes for reporting to the highways service. Fix My Street will no longer be an access point for reporting issues. Instead, the preferred method is to use Somerset Council's online reporting portal: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>

This ensures issues like potholes, blocked drains, and overgrown vegetation are logged accurately, tracked, and quickly addressed. When reports are submitted through this portal or the call centre, they are automatically assigned to the correct team, and enquirers receive updates via reference numbers.

Councillors and the public are asked to no longer use Fix My Street or email reports for highways.

This new process aims to streamline issue reporting, reduce unnecessary communication and duplication, and ensure quick resolution of highway defects.

25/1284/c P.C.S.O. Report:

Nothing to report. Cllr Masters requested a contact number for the Rural Police division after recent thefts of farm equipment.

Action: Clerk

25/1285 MATTERS ARISING

25/1285/a Highways – relocating the existing '20 When Lights Show' wig wag unit.

The clerk reported that the response from Highways had been positive. Rebecca Vaughn clarified that the signage was originally installed to serve Hambridge Community Primary School. With the opening of the new Somerset Progressive School, she confirmed she would be happy to consider the relocation of the unit which is currently situated on the grassed verge of the Old Vicarage, so it would incorporate both schools. She informed the Parish Council that the complete unit requires a wide verge, with an unobstructed view of the signs by oncoming traffic, which is free of overhanging vegetation. If the unit is relocated, it must still meet Department for Transport criteria. If a suitable location cannot be found, the unit would have to remain in its current location. The concern with relocating the sign was the greater the distance the signage is located from the Primary School, it could risk weakening the intended purpose of the signs message to highway users. The Department for Transport states the warning signage should be located 45 - 110 meters from the school. For information, it is currently located 100 meters from the Primary School. These warning signs should only be installed where there is a likelihood of encountering children walking and cycling in and around the road network.

After Ms Vaughn had undertaken an initial assessment, she felt that alternative appropriate sites were limited. A possible solution could be to locate the unit on the opposite side of the road, approximately 40 meters south of

the new Somerset Progressive Schools vehicular access. The wigwag unit would be located between the war memorial boundary and the Left-hand side of a field gateway. If approved, there is an area of low vegetation overgrowth, which we would regular ongoing attention to maintain visibility.

This proposal would require two considerations by the Parish Council.

1. Would the community be content with the unit's locality to the war memorial.
2. Will this proposal be approved by the landowner of the adjacent field. It appears the fields access is not in use, but this needs to be confirmed. The signpost would be located at the edge of the gateway opening and could be clipped by large machinery if the gateway is still in use.

The Clerk will arrange a site meeting between Ms. Vaughn and The Parish Council, preferably to take place to coincide with school drop of or collection time.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Denley has yet to reinstate the speed sensor but said he will do so. This will be installed on the entrance to the village from the Westport direction.

Action: Cllr Denley

25/1285/b War memorial railings

The Chair Cllr Meecham had received a response from the War Memorial Trust. They confirmed that due to previously funding works to the war memorial in both 2016 and 2017 (2016 they funded works to clean the war memorial and surrounding paving and then in 2017 they funded relaying the paving slabs and repainting the surrounding railings), they were unable to fund further works which had been previously funded. The Parish Council agreed to accept the quote that Cllr Maidment had previously received from a contractor. It was also agreed to request Max Von Tyszka to clear the site of weeds and overgrowth. Clerk to speak to Max. Cllr Maidment to liaise with the contractor.

Action: Clerk/Cllr Maidment

25/1285/c Village ranger type jobs

Clerk to ask Max to Clear the war memorial of overgrowth. (see war memorial - above)

25/1285/d Email and website – changes to a gov.uk domain

After forwarding all the information to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting, the clerk discussed the move to a gov.uk domain for both the website and email addresses. This move is advised to help parish councils maintain a professional and trustworthy online presence, enhance security, and comply with legal obligations. The clerk explained that she had already contacted our website provider Town and Parish websites, who talked her through the process and gave her the costs. The clerk explained that the parish clerk must have a role-based gov.uk email and to meet our FOI and transparency obligations, it is recommended that each councillor has a gov.uk email address as well. They discussed the current village website, and that a parish or town council can only have the gov.uk domain, not a general village website. The clerk recommended that it would be better to have a new website built now and close the current website before it became a statutory requirement. A page for the village hall could be included on the parish council website, giving contact details to the village hall bookings secretary, as well as a page for news/events. The parish council currently pay for the annual hosting of the village website but if this was closed, the parish council would still only have one website to pay for annual hosting. The gov.uk domain would also mean new email addresses would be provided to each parish councillor. The clerk explained that much of the information from the current website could be transferred to the new website. The new website would either have the words 'Parish Council' or 'PC' in the domain name, as this was a legal requirement for a gov.uk website.

The Parish Councillors were unanimous in their decision to proceed with the changes now and asked the clerk to instruct Town and Parish websites to design and set up transferring the domain of the website to a gov.uk as well as the provision of email addresses for the clerk and each parish councillor. The clerk explained the setup costs and clarified the increase to the annual hosting costs which will cover both the new website and emails. The clerk would organise a contract with Town and Parish Websites to set up, manage and host the new website for the parish council. The clerk will inform Squiggle.

Action: Clerk

Proposed: Cllr. S Denley

Seconded: Cllr. P Masters

Agreed unanimously.

25/1285/e Proposed new division boundaries for Somerset – consultation (closing date 11th Aug)

The clerk explained that the proposed new division would be known as the Curry Rivel division. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England recommended a division that included the parishes of Beercrocombe, Curry Mallet, Curry Rivel, Fivehead, Barrington, Drayton, Hambridge & Westport, Isle Abbotts, Isle Brewers, Muchelney, Puckington and Stocklinch. As the majority of these 12 parishes lie within the Levels & Moors Local Community Network, they considered this division pattern to reflect established community ties and shared local interests, ensuring effective and convenient local government.

25/1286 PLANNING:

25/1286/a Matters for report:

Planning breaches: Ongoing.

25/1286/b Decisions Notified:

Nothing to report

25/1286/c Applications for consideration.

Nothing to report

25/1287 FINANCE:

25/1287/a Matters for report

Budget – monthly update: The clerk gave a monthly update to the Parish Council on income and expenditure to date.

25/1287/b Matters for Resolution

Nothing to report.

25/1287/c Cheques Payable:

All paid via Unity Trust Bank – direct online transfer.

PAYMENTS DUE		
Louise Brooks	Democratic services – May 2025	£ 588.05
HMRC	Employee NI & PAYE & Employer NI to pay – May 2025	£ 208.32
Louise Brooks	Home Office Monthly Allowance – May 2025 - Government set	£ 26.00
Louise Brooks	May Office supplies – Includes paper, ink and other office consumables, postage.	£ 17.71
Max Von Tyszka	Rec grass cutting May 2 x cuts @ £150 per cut	£ 300.00
Max Von Tyszka	Churchyard grass cutting May 1 x cut @£125 per cut	£ 125.00

Proposed: Cllr. R Maidment

Seconded: Cllr P Masters

Agreed unanimously.

25/1288 CORRESPONDENCE:

The Clerk reported that all correspondence received had been forwarded to the Parish Councillors.

25/1289 FOOTPATHS:

The clerk reported that contact had now been made with the new Rights of Way Officer for H&W. Cllr Denley had also now made contact with him and talks had begun again with regards to the proposed diversion.

Action: Cllr Denley

25/1278 MEMBERS' REPORTS/ITEMS FOR THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

Cllr Hill reported that the fingerpost at the junction to Drayton required refurbishing. The clerk would contact both Curry Rivel and Drayton clerks to see who was responsible.

Action: Clerk

25/1279 Items for next Agenda:

Domain

Speed sensor – reinstalled and working

Highways - response following meeting

Railings

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th JULY 2025 at 7.30 pm in the village hall.