WEST CAMEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the West Camel Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Conference Room at The Davis Hall.

Present:	Chairman	**Kathy Miller-Hunt (KMH)**
	Councillors	**Cliff Baker (CB)**
		Jane Lawrence (JL)
		Jenny Down (JD)
		Jo Roberts (JR)
	Clerk	**Angela Suter (AS)**

Somerset Council Councillor – **Cllr Henry Hobhouse (HH), Cllr Kevin Messenger (KM)**

Members of the public – 3

0925.01 Electors' Participation – All 3 members of the public introduced themselves and said they were interested in hearing what council covers and had particular interests in flood mitigation and recent planning submissions both of which were on the agenda.

0925.02 Apologies for Absence – Mick Richens (MR), Geoff Chapman (GC)

0925.03 Minutes of the last meeting (03/07/25) to be agreed and signed - The minutes were agreed by all councillors and were duly signed by KMH and AS.

0925.04 Matters of Report arising from the previous meeting minutes (not on the agenda) – None.

0925.05 Declaration of Interest and details of dispensations requested / granted since last meeting (councillors and/or visiting councillors). – None.

0925.06 Somerset Council Councillor feedback – No attendees for the Peglar App set up on offer from 7pm. HH reported £35 million in savings which will go back into reserves meaning Somerset Council would not have to enter receivership in 2026. Adult and social care costs still a huge concern. HH reported that going forward the EA will no longer be dredging rivers but will continue to run the pumps on the levels. HH also spoke on the backlog of planning applications and the effort to try and save money, he spoke about computer learning in relation to being able to enable AI to automatically respond but indicated this initially requires human input of data to enable this to happen. HH added he was appealing the change of the Sparkford-Old Quarry footpath being changed to a bridleway. KMH thanked HH for his contribution.

0925.07 Standing Items of Business

a. **Local Crime**
   I. **Neighbourhood Watch** – The Co-ordinator Adrian Davenport (AD) had nothing to share this month.

b. **Footpaths / RoW –** LS provided an update of footpath jobs completed to date. There are 2 jobs to complete still, one of which is Downhead Lane towards Babcary. PC agreed to use gate already supplied for WN 23/8 as this is now not required. LS with Jeff's assistance and Jeff will install at cost to Joy Whittington for labour. **(LS)**

Initialled.....
Chairman

Minutes of the West Camel Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Conference Room at The Davis Hall.

c. Environment.

i. Flood Plan – Community JL to carry out inventory and signpost vulnerable residents. Agreed it should be on notice boards around the village and published on village website. (**JL/CB)**

ii. Flood Monitoring Proposals – still in progress part of the above. It was mentioned that perhaps residents could adopt the drain/s outside their properties and take action to keep this clear of fallen leaves/debris etc. HH confirmed Tracy Harris is contact for flail hedge cutting hedges/roadsides/footpaths. A suitably worded email to go out to all households. (**AS)**

iii. Flood Mitigation Proposals 202/26 – SRA Grant has been received. Work to be completed by September 2026. Cliff mentioned a meeting had been held at the Old Mill and the owners had agreed silt removed could be left on site. Jenny Clothier has agreed access through her field. Russell Best with equipment planned for end September/beg October to carry out works with Lengthsman. JL and residents present mentioned the river at Frog Lane bridge required some action taking to remove weed, free up channel for water flow and JL had spoken to landowner who had agreed access via his field would be granted. To be looked at as part of SRA Grant above at the Old Mill. **(CB/LS/JL)**

iv. Hire of working boat no longer an option. AS presented an alternative in a flat-bottomed boat. Lightweight so could be carried around any smaller channels in the river if needed. Seller had agreed a reduced delivery charge if purchase made week beg 8th September. Proposed by CB seconded by JR and agreed by all. AS to arrange invoice, payment and delivery. **(AS)**

d. Play Area / Ground.

i. Replacement play equipment – installation completed and a credit received of £679.54 after AS argued item not supplied or used in works. VAT to be reclaimed and set in a separate funding pot for upgrade/maintenance required on older equipment following our annual play ground inspection report. AS reported no money was needed from the CBF grant as all money was fundraised for the project through National Lottery and Donations.

ii. Angela informed all present that a bench had been ordered with the donation of £1500 received from West Camel Parochial Churches. Andy Warner and Jeff Stamp will install, all to be funded from the donation amount received.

e. **Community Housing Scheme**

i. Community Housing – On hold.

ii. Plot 7 – third period commenced 11th August 2025 and an offer was accepted on 29/08/2025.

f. **Traffic Calming.**

i. Fingerpost sign at Parsonage crossroads – noted new fingerpost installed and repaired post received and in storage.

ii. Further signage regarding children playing on Southmead. AS has made contact with the Traffic Engineer for Somerset Council and this is now on a schedule of works. No timescale can be given as of yet for a site visit due to the current work load. Further contact has been received by a resident on Southmead calling for a reduction in the speed limit on Southmead from 30 mph to 20 mph. AS contacted the traffic engineer from Somerset South regarding the possibility of this. There has to be supporting evidence for an amendment to be made and there is currently none. Police would need to be consulted, and in support and costs to cover the Traffic Regulation Order amendments, advertising and groundworks etc. could amount to some £15,000 depending on what is required. PC will not be progressing at this stage and await a site visit for the time being. **(AS)**

Initialled.....
Chairman

Minutes of the West Camel Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Conference Room at The Davis Hall.

iii. The question of a third SID was raised and council agreed this is on hold for the time being. CB discussed traffic figures and numbers and will access information on downloading data received from the SID's currently installed and discuss with resident Alan Wright.

g. **Community Engagement & Communication**
   i. Saturday afternoon par-tea has been held twice now organised by Cllr Jo Roberts and the Walnut Tree as a way for people to meet up for tea and chat on a Saturday afternoon. This will be held every other month going forward. Good attendance.
   ii. Village email now being used to send out PC meeting agendas and draft minutes.

h. **Parish Council Processes / Unitary Authority Update**
   i. Lengthsman – programme of routine works and monthly hours/budget and management of requests/works to be carried out nearing completion to be issued to council. AS put forward that the Lengthsman role should be managed by Cllr Cliff Baker going forward.

i. **Highways**
   i. Sam Landrigan email received questions presented to council and attendees regarding if they felt the new road had a positive impact on holiday traffic through the village and its impact. All present agreed there had certainly been less traffic than previously and generally quite quiet. CB to respond via email **(CB)**

j. **Community Benefit Fund (CBF)** – no new applications.

0925.08 Correspondence / Other matters requiring action
a. Parish Preparedness Survey, clerk to respond. **(AS)**
b. Grit Bins – clearing out, loosening and refilling if required. Agreed lengthsman to clear and advise clerk.

0925.09 Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer Report
a. Interim Fidelity Check – Completed no issues to highlight. **(MR)**
b. Payment Authorisation – Agreed by all. Those highlighted in yellow paid prior to the meeting.

Cheque No. or OP Ref	Payee	Service / Goods Purchased	Amount
16/2526	HMRC	Q1 PAYE	207.97
17/2526	SALC	Training Course – Jo Roberts	25.00
18/2526	PKF Littlejohn	AGAR Fee	378.00
19/2526	J Stamp	Lengthsmans Duties July	60.00
20/2526	Kompan	Playground Equipment	22,956.76
21/2526	Somerset Forge	Repaired Fingerpost	564.00
22/2526	Somerset Forge	New Fingerpost	1,308.00
23/2526	J Stamp	Lengthsmans Duties August	60.00
24/2526	L Stevens	Expenses & Hours (July-Aug)	143.44
25/2526	A Suter	Expenses to 04/09/25	31.98
26/2526	PI Company Limited	Playground Equipment Inspection	276.00
Total			**£26,011.15**

Initialled.....
Chairman

Minutes of the West Camel Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Conference Room at The Davis Hall.

0925.10 Planning Applications

New planning applications

25/01224/FUL – Cartgate. Development of a trunk road services area and associated development.

HH mentioned he was contesting due to several issues including the biodiversity of the site and its proposed entrance where there is a dragonfly pond.

Planning Updates

25/00137/FUL – Hopkins Estates access track from the new A303 Steart Hill Access Road – Sarah Dyke's office confirms there are ongoing talks with Somerset Council and Cllr Richard Wilkins – Lead Member for Transport and Digital regarding the various ongoing issues with Hopkins Estates.

25/010906/S73A – Plot 1 South Street S73A Application to vary condition 05 to amend the design of the building and move slightly further back to avoid a well in the front of the property. West Camel Parish Council submitted no objection. Residents present were advised that if they wish to respond to the application they should do so via the South Somerset Planning portal.

0925.11 Matters of Report / Future Business

a. **Other Matters of Report –** none.
b. **Matters of Future Business –** a question was raised by Gavin Ableson as to how the community housing scheme works in relation to funds from the sale of the plots. AS to contact Les Stevens regarding this and report back to Gavin.

0925.12 Date of next meeting – Thursday 6th November 2025 in the Davis Hall Committee Room.

0925.13 The meeting closed at 21.04pm

Signed..... **.....**
Vice Chairman Date 6th November 2025 **Clerk Date 6th November 2025**

Initialled.....
Chairman