

Minutes of Queen Camel Parish Council meeting on Monday 17 January 2026 at 7:30pm, Marples Room, Queen Camel Memorial Hall

Present - Councillors John Brendon, Bryan Norman, Daniel Hewlett, Philip Jones, Roy Lawrenson and Phillip Hall.

6 members of the public were in attendance and Somerset Councillor Henry Hobhouse.

01/01/26

Public Session

- Stones out of the bridge over the River Cam – resident advised that these had still not been repaired since a vehicle knocked them out a few months previously. Mr Brendon advised that it has been reported to Somerset Highways.
- Blackwell Road flooded by Packhorse Bridge and the road is breaking up. Unfortunately the work to be completed on Packhorse Bridge has now been postponed to 2027.
- Gullies in Mildmay Drive and England Lane have growth in them.
- Repairs to the road near the pub – resident has sent in photographs as he does not believe the work has been carried out very well. Councillor Brendon advised that the parish council will be keeping a log of these highways issues in the hope that we can monitor more effectively if work is in progress or planned in.

01/02/26

Apologies and updates on any vacancies

- Somerset Councillor Kevin Messenger, Councillor Chappell, Councillor Davidson and Councillor Hewlett. These were accepted.
- Councillor Norman advised that he will be stepping down as a parish councillor at the annual parish council meeting in May.
- Councillor Brendon advised there is currently one vacancy and this would then increased the total number of vacancies to two.

01/03/26

Declaration of interests in the agenda

- Councillor Phil Jones for any discussion around the solar farm as potentially connected to a work contract.
- Councillor Brendon for the grant application at 01/17/26 as he is a member of the PCC.

01/04/26

Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 17.11.2025

These were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the chair.

Proposed: Councillor Lawrenson

Seconded: Councillor Norman

All councilors present in agreement

01/05/26

Actions from last meetings

- Cobble that need to be replaced on Church Path – Councillor Norman advised that he has not secured a contractor. A name was put forward for Councillor Norman to contact. There are at least 12 cobbles that need to be fixed in place.
- Crack in the wall of the Pavilion at the Playing Field – Councillor Chappell will update at the next meeting.
- Heritage Trust update – Councillors Hewlett and Davidson were following this up and will report back at the next meeting.

01/06/26

Somerset Councillor Report – Henry Hobhouse

- The bridge at Queen Camel is going to be resurfaced next month in February. There will be a road closure and councillors requested that the traffic is not re-routed to Blackwell Road.
- Bridgelyampton – work was completed to reduce flooding problems, but unfortunately the problems remain.
- Phosphates – the government produced a white paper on 19.12.2025 which changed the previous rules. There are separate concerns that the sewage farms are not being upgraded as the villages served are not large enough to meet the criteria for being upgraded.

01/07/26

To RECEIVE the Clerk's Report of actions taken and updates for information

- Clerk's Report has been circulated to councillors and placed on the website.
- Policy reviews will take place at the next Finance, Personnel and Risk Committee.
- There remains a vacancy for a councillor

01/08/26

To CONSIDER the following planning applications received and RESOLVE to submit comments where appropriate.

- **25/02818/TCA Queen Camel Community Trust Ltd, The Old School, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil** - Notification of intent to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree within a conservation area. T1 Tibetan Cherry – 8.10 metres tall light reduction on height by up to 1.5 metres. This will clear the branches away from the power lines. Lifting the lower crown by up to 1.5 metres to allow clearance underneath. **This is a notification only.**
- Potential name for the Ashford development – councillors were in agreement that it should have a Roman connection. Clerk to email Ashford Homes.
ACTION: Clerk
- Ashford Homes Section 106 agreement – Councillor Brendon has spoken to Tom Griffiths (Director for Ashford Homes) on issues raised in previous meetings. Ashford Homes are not going back to Somerset Council in relation to phosphate issues as it will take too long. Therefore they will put in place the mitigating action required. Councillor Lawrenson raised ongoing concerns about drainage as there has already been flooding and it would appear that there are drainage problems in very wet winters. Councillor Hobhouse recommended contacting local MP.

01/09/26

To RECEIVE approved planning applications

- None notified.

10/10/26

To RECEIVE other planning information

- Friends of Mudford Action Group (FOMAG) – feedback from recently meeting (information circulated to councillors). Mudford Parish Council have been granted permission to progress to judicial review for the Primrose Lane development in their parish. There is also another proposed development at a nearby location on the other side of the road for 200 houses. If granted, this will impact further upon traffic in that area.
- Somerset parish councils group working to challenge current Somerset Council planning working process feedback – the first meeting will be on 23.01.26 and Councillor Chappell will be attending.
- Four parish councils working group complaint against Sutton Farm planning approvals and enforcement action update – Councillor Chappell has circulated information to councillors. Councillors noted there appear to be fewer lorries through the village recently.

- Old surgery planning response re boarded up windows update – Councillor Brendon has had a conversation with Somerset Council with a promise of further contact, but to date there has been none.

01/11/26 Memorial Hall AGM information and plans for the future

- Two members of the committee came to provide information to the parish council.
- The committee are struggling to recruit volunteers following the loss of a few members. A leaflet drop is planned in the village to try and recruit some more volunteers.
- As well as more volunteers there are certain skills that are required to complete the booking and finance tasks. The committee are considering appointing an administrator but this come at a cost. The administration commitment would be 3-4 hours per week.
- Currently it has reserves in the bank of £18 000 but if costs increase then the committee may come to the parish council to ask for a grant.
- The parish council advised that their preference would be to consider a grant request for a capital cost rather than an ongoing cost of employing a clerk.

08.30pm Members of Memorial Hal Committee left the meeting

01/12/26 Highways and Traffic

- Updates on HGV traffic through the village update – Councillor Chappell to update at the next meeting.
- Blocked drains and gutters update – clerk to provide a list to Councillor Hobhouse before his meeting on 18 January.
ACTION: Clerk
- Potholes on Mildmay Drive update – Councillor Hobhouse will pick these up at his meeting with Somerset Highways on 18 January.

01/13/26 Flood Working Group update

- Chair of the Flood Working Group is currently away and will report back for the next meeting in March.

01/14/26 Playing Field Working Group updates

- John Deere tractor repairs and servicing update – the tractor went for a service before Christmas and there were a number of parts that needed to be replaced and the final invoice was in the sum of £582.81. Councillors agreed to pay the invoice as it was an emergency to enable it to be put back in service.
Proposed: Councillor P Jones
Seconded: Councillor B Norman
All councillors present in agreement
- Review of finances – spending within budget lines
- Cracking in Pavilion wall update – Councillor Norman agreed to look at the crack with Councillor Chappell and report back at the next meeting.
ACTION: Councillors Norman and Chappell
- Exploration of goal posts – Councillor Hall has completed some research on the purchase of goals. He has looked at three different types ranging from £1894 up to pair on wheels costing £2946. Currently there are not any football teams requesting to rent the field and therefore it was agreed to put this on hold and pass over to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to consider as part of the funding requirements for any new development.
ACTION: Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
- Consider cricket club request for new cricket nets – at the previous meeting the parish council had agreed to commit up to £10 000 for new cricket nets as a grant from the

Community Fund. Cricket England have confirmed that would match fund if the cricket club could raise £15 000 and therefore this would raise £30 000 in total, which will cover the costs of the nets. The cricket club have already raised £700. Question asked if planning permission is required to put the nets up and the representative from the cricket club will ask Sparkford if this is the case.

- Approval for replacement for wildlife camera – a camera was borrowed and set up to try and gain some footage of wildlife. Unfortunately the camera has been stolen and a replacement now needs to be purchased to return to the owner. It was agreed to authorise up to £200 to replace. Clerk to advise Councillor Chappell.

ACTION: Clerk and Councillor Chappell

- Somerset circular regarding Dog Control and PSDOs – Somerset Council are planning to consolidate all existing dog control Public Spaces Protection Orders across Somerset. PSDOs are legal tools available to tackle behaviours harmful to community quality of life. These orders include measures for dog fouling, exclusion of dogs from children’s play areas and beaches and requires dogs to be kept on leads in specific locations. Councillors agreed that we need to be aware of what is already in place in Queen Camel and therefore the clerk will contact Somerset Council to try and determine what is in place. To be placed on next agenda in time to comment before the consultation closes on 20.03.2026

01/15/26 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

- Meeting with consultant on 20 January 2026 and therefore more details will follow at the next parish council meeting in March, including the costs of commissioning a consultant to progress the review.

01/16/25 Update from the last Local Community Network (LCN) meeting

- Councillor Chappell has forwarded to the clerk an email from another parish council that attended the most recent LCN meeting in January, which confirmed that the Call for Sites information from Somerset Council has been delayed and would be released until March. It was due to be available as from the end of December 2025 and would provide details of sites that been put forward for potential development.

01/17/25 Grant Applications

- Queen Camel PCC (St Barnabas Church) for £1200 – Councillor Brendon stepped back from chairing this item or being part of the decision due to an interest already declared. Councillors raised a concern as part of the grant request was for printing the magazine which they felt should be reduced for cost and environmental reasons. Grant was agreed but councillors would like to see an Action Plan on how to reduce printing costs going forward.

Proposed: Councillor P Jones

Seconded: Councillor B Norman

All councillors present in agreement apart from Councillor Brendon who abstained due to interest in this items.

11/18/25 Finance and Banking

1. Budget update and forecast for 2026-7 – the budget proposal was circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors were in agreement that spending would need to increase during the next financial year as all costs were increasing. Acknowledgement that the fees for the consultant for the review of the Neighbourhood Plan would need to be factored in. Clerk confirmed that £2000 had been put into the budget to accommodate this potential expense. The budget has been set with an overspend of £4000 as each budget line has been predicted at worst case scenario. The recommendation is that the precept request is increased by 4.15% to council tax payers so that the parish council received a precept in the sum of £26 400 for 2026-7.

Councillor P Jones advised that £800 will need to be added to the budget for the defibrillator batteries.

ACTION: Clerk to add £800 to budget.

2. Precept request for 2026-7 - councillors agreed that a request should be made for £26 400.

Proposed: Councillor J Brendon

Seconded: Councillor R Lawrence

All councillors present in agreement

ACTION: Clerk to submit precept request to Somerset Council

3. Payments made since November parish council meeting
 - Standing Order for clerk home office allowance - £26 on 01.12.2025
 - PATA for payroll services - £37.35
 - Clerk salary for October - £479.75 on 01.11.2025
 - Direct debit for credit card - £30.75
 - EG Coles for new mower - £9600
 - Kaye Elston for office sundries - £22.57
 - Direct Debit for Information Commissioner - £47
 - Bank service charge - £6 on 30.11.25
 - Standing Order for clerk home office allowance - £26 on 01.01.26
 - Clerk salary for November - £602.55 on 01.12.2025
 - Grant to Countess Gytha School - £1500
 - HAGS final play equipment payment - £7687.96
 - Direct Debit for credit card - £6
 - Western Webb Ltd for email service - £86.40
 - Phil Nicholls for PAC testing - £22.50
 - Memorial Hall for room hire - £35
 - PATA UK for payroll services - £52.35
 - HMRC for PAYE - £657.92
 - Clerk salary for December - £495.30 on 01.01.26
 - Bank service charge - £6 on 31.12.25
4. Receipts since September meeting
 - Sarah Elliott for football pitch hire - £54
 - Interest on Instant Access account up to 31.12.2025 - £368.69
5. Upcoming payments prior to next meeting
 - Clerk salary for January and February
 - HMRC payment
 - Loxston Groundcare Ltd (service and repairs to John Deere tractor) - £582.81
 - Credit card for January and February
 - Office allowance for January and February - £26 x 2
 - Bank service charges for January and February – 2 x £6

These payments were approved by councilors

Proposed: Councillor P Jones

Seconded: Councillor B Hall

All councillors present in agreement

- Bank balances as at 31.12.2026

Current - £2978.98

Instant Access - £54 675.92

- Bank reconciliation

Prepared and shows the balances above. Signed.

- Bank signatories – Mrs Chappell and Mr Hewlett have been set up and awaiting signatures on the new forms.
- Internal auditor – parish councillors were in agreement to approach Simon Pritchard to request he completed the internal audit again this year. Clerk to approach.

ACTION: Clerk

01/19/26

Policy review

Financial Regulations were agreed subject to typing errors.

01/20/26

Correspondence Received and circulated

SALC newsletters
Somerset Council circulars
Parish Online newsletters

01/21/26

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 1930 in the Marples Room at the Memorial Hall

Please note this is a change of date subsequent to the meeting

Dates of future meetings

Annual and Full Parish Council Meeting – Thursday 07 May 2026 at 1930

Full Parish Council Meeting – Monday 20 July 2026 at 1930

Annual Village Meeting – Friday 15 May 2026

Finance Personnel and Risk Committee – Monday 20 April 2026 at 1930

Playing Field Working Group – TBC

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – TBC

Meeting closed at 09.30pm

