

Minutes of Queen Camel Parish Council meeting on Monday 20 July 2026 at 7:30pm, Marples Room, Queen Camel Memorial Hall

Present - Councillors John Brendon, Philip Jones, Harriet Chappell, Roy Lawrenson and Phillip Hall.

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

07/01/26 Public Session

- Dr Andrew Clegg (PhD in Chemistry) feedback on the testing of the River Cam – there is dissolved oxygen (80%) and phosphate, which are both required but if there is too much it can become a pollutant. Current phosphate reading 0.94-0.96 (USA units – equivalent to 0.3 UK units). This reading is twice the measurement of the River Parrett and results from the sewage treatment plant which is nearby. The plant does not have to remove pollutants but it is planned before 2030.

ACTION: Councillor Hobhouse will request this from Wessex Water

Andrew advised that communities can purchase kits themselves to regularly test the water. The kit costs £100 and the sachets to test are 20p each. Councillor Lawrenson and Martin Lilley are willing to take on this task.

07/02/26 Apologies and updates on any vacancies

- Somerset Councillor Kevin Messenger and Councillor Hewlett. These were accepted.
- Councillors Davidson and Warne not present and no apologies received.

07/03/26 Declaration of interests in the agenda

- There were none.

07/04/26 Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 07.05.2026, Annual Parish Council meeting 07.05.2026 and the EOM on 22.06.2026

Minutes of normal parish council meeting 07.05.2026 – Minute 16 the grant amount was £110 and not £1100. Clerk will amend minutes on the website.

All sets of minutes were agreed to be an accurate record after the above amendment and signed by the chair.

Proposed: Councillor Chappell

Seconded: Councillor Jones

All councillors present in agreement

07/05/26 Actions from last meeting

- Heritage Trust update – no further updates. One of the challenges will be to locate trustees who are able to sign on the NatWest account. Councillor Brendon agreed to talk to Andrew Hoddinot.

ACTION: Councillor Brendon

- Vacancy on parish council – the vacancy created by the resignation of Bryan Norman has now been advertised and the community have not come forward to request an election. Therefore the parish council can co-opt a new parish councilor if one comes forward.

07/06/26 Somerset Councillor Report – Henry Hobhouse

- Sink hole at Station Road in Castle Cary – work is progressing on this and the road should be reopened on 14 August 2026.
- A371 road works – this has been delayed by a further 12 months.

- 07/07/26 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. Items are covered on the agenda.
- 07/08/26 Planning applications to consider and submit comments where appropriate.**
- **26/01457/S73 Rectory Barn, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7NE** - S73 application to vary Condition 02 (approved plans) for the removal of internal gallery landing and altered gable end, new window and door positioning relating to planning consent 25/0257/HOU: Single Storey extension. This is a modified version of an application already commented on by the parish council. Councillor agreed to remind Somerset Planning of the previous comments but they did not have anymore to add.
ACTION: Clerk
- 07/09/26 To RECEIVE approved planning applications**
- There were none.
- 07/10/26 To RECEIVE other planning information**
- Planning permission for cricket nets on the Playing Field update – an alternative site has been established to the north of the Pavilion. Unfortunately this alternative site still required an archeological assessment but presents a lower risk so hopefully the type of assessment should be reduced to a watching brief. The cost of this would be £2845 + £650 (net) contingency depending on what is found. There is still a need to an ecology and wildlife survey which would be £800.
The fee for the initial submission for planning permission has been refunded in the sum of £90 which is the platform administration fee. Councillors agreed that the planning application should be resubmitted alongside obtaining the necessary reports and that the nets would be placed north of the Pavilion. Agreed to spend up to £5000.
Proposed: Councillor Brendon
Seconded: Councillor Lawrence
All councilors present in agreement
 - Friends of Mudford Action Group (FOMAG) feedback from judicial review – Mudford Parish Council did not succeed in their legal action and the judge advised that no further action can be taken.
 - Sutton Farm and the HGV Problem meeting to seek legal advice – legal advised that a legal challenge to Somerset Council is limited in relation to the planning permission granted. Chair of the working group has submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman re the planning permission. Also need to check with Somerset Council if the land around the lake is continuing to be developed. Councillor Chappell believes this is another example of what can happen when the body that determines these licence applications is based remotely. Agreed to write to local MP, Sarah Dyke, to see if they could be challenged.
ACTION: Clerk and Councillor Chappell
There is also a concern that the verges on this route have been damaged and Somerset Highways have already been contacted to ask if they can be re-instated.
 - Old Surgery planning response re boarded up windows – Councillor Brendon has chased but not received any further updates. Somerset Councillor Hobhouse agreed to chase with Enforcement Officer.
ACTION: Somerset Councillor Henry Hobhouse
 - Ashford Homes development update of drainage concerns – Councillor Brendon has spoken to Tom Griffiths to request a site visit but he advised they cannot accommodate at this time due to the current activity on the site. He has given assurances that the drainage infrastructure will be installed once the archaeological evaluation works have been completed, which means the attenuation features will be

installed prior to development. Councillors would still like a site visit and Councillor Brendon advised he would speak to Tom Griffiths again.

ACTION: Councillor Brendon

- Somerset Council Call for Sites – the initial HELAA has been published. Councillors thought the sites identified for Queen Camel were interesting as some have already been refused permission. There were some sites in the document that councillors were unaware were being considered by landowners and a number of them are on flood plains. All these sites will need to be considered when reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Local Plan consultation – Councillors Brendon and Chappell will submit a response by the deadline of 24.07.2026.
Concern raised in relation to Somerset Councillor, Oliver Patrick who is an Account Director for Community Communications Partnership (The CCP) whose aim is to improve engagement in planning matters. Councillors had concerns that this is potentially a conflict of interest with his role on Somerset South Planning Committee and agreed to raise this with the Chair of Somerset Council. Clerk and Councillor Chappell to draft a letter.

ACTION: Councillor Chappell and Clerk

- Planning Training feedback – Councillors Chappell and Brendon attended and noted that comments on applications can only be made in relation to material considerations e.g. flooding, affecting privacy etc. Also stressed that it was important to ensure submissions were in by the deadline. A template was provided which Councillor Chappell will pass to the clerk.
- SCRAPP meeting update – the group have written to Steve Reed (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) challenging the 41% increase in the housing target for Somerset. Councillor Chappell has joined the board of SCRAPP.

07/11/26

Highways and Traffic

- Updates on HGV traffic through the village update – Peter Farror has repeated the traffic he did last year. This evidenced a 19% reduction in traffic through the village. This indicates that the improvements to the A303 have supported a decrease in volume.
- Blocked drains and gutters update – Church Path drain is still blocked. Potentially may need to contact South West Heritage.
- Reinstatement of verges in Sutton Montis Road – Somerset Highways have been contacted but no update yet. Councillor Hobhouse agreed to chase this with Tracy Harris from Somerset Highways.

ACTION: Councillor Hobhouse

- Traffic visibility issue near Rectory Farm South on A359 – a member of the public has complained about the hedge of a house that they believe obscures the view. Councillors are aware this has been raised before but unfortunately there is no action as the hedge is not over the public highway land.
- Ownership of footpath and ditch from Playing Field to West Camel Road and maintenance of that path – councillors believe the ditches are owned by the houses whose gardens they back on to and the pathway may be owned by Somerset Council who put it in place. Therefore the maintenance of the ditches is down to the homeowners. Somerset Council laid the path. Need to check in with Tracy Harris regarding the ownership of the path.

ACTION: Clerk

07/12/26

Flood Working Group update

- Grant request to Somerset Rivers Authority to clear culvert under the bridge and clear Henshallbrook along Sutton Montis Road was successful and the grant has been given in full. The parish council, the Old School and Somerset Council Highways and

Structures team have also contributed . Work is due to start week commencing 14 September and Councillor Chappell and Martin Lilley will project manage the process. Henshallbrook needs to be cleared to prevent flooding onto the road. Councillor Lawrenson challenged this approach as he wants assurance that this will not be putting the Wales area more at risk of flooding as water could get to the Cam more quickly. Once this water flows more easily is there increased risk for properties downstream? Martin Lilley suggested Yeovil River Trust could provide modelling to understand if this would happen.

- Somerset Council allocation of Flood Resilience Fund of fifty million pounds – Councillor Brendon and Martin Lilley attended a meeting arranged by Somerset Council to explain how to apply for funding. Currently working on a plan for the Cam River catchment area to put in attenuation ponds, but this will require the permission of landowners. If funding is granted then it will need to be spent within two years. Grant requests need to be submitted by the middle of August. Somerset Council will advise in September if grants requests have been successful.

07/13/26

Playing Field Working Group updates

- Update on Playing Field maintenance required – none to note currently.
- Football teams using the Playing Field and goal posts update – Councillor Chappell has spoken to a team who would like to rent a pitch regularly. Goal posts and nets have previously been researched and can be sourced from Soccer Store for £1595 with a 3-4 week delivery time. It was agreed to purchase them and Councillor Chappell will speak to Paul Worton from the Cricket Club to confirm location and pitch marking.

Proposed: Councillor Jones

Seconded: Councillor Chappell

All councillors present in agreement

- Transfer of Playing Field area from Somerset Council to Queen Camel Parish Council after expiry of ten year retention – this needs to be followed up with Somerset Council.

ACTION: Clerk

07/14/26

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

- Annual Report has been circulated but the electoral roll numbers need to be added into the document. Clerk to send to Councillor Brendon from the electoral roll.

ACTION: Clerk

Councillor Brendon and Chappell to prepare document for the website.

ACTION: Councillors Brendon and Chappell

07/15/26

Update from the last Local Community Network (LCN) meeting

- South East LCN AGM new date 18 August 2026 at 1900 at Bruton Community Hall.

07/16/26

Grant Applications

- There were none.

07/17/26

Finance and Banking

- Budget monitoring – SCRIBE printout has been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Budgets are within forecast at this early part of the financial year. The £15 000 grant received from the second solar farm has been transferred across to savings and will be added into the Community Benefit Fund in the Reserves Statement.
- Community Benefit Fund current balance is £37 914 before the £15 000 grant is added.
- Payments made since last meeting in May 2026 – see schedule circulated and on website.
- Upcoming payments to approve – see schedule circulated and on website.
- Bank balances as at 30.06.2026 and Bank Reconciliation

Current account: £1678.16

Instant Access: £78 601.09

Bank reconciliation as at 30.06.2026 has been reviewed by Finance Risk and Personnel Committee and signed by Councillor Brendon at this meeting.

- Purchase of defib pads as and when required – pads are £57 per set and batteries are £400 each. Councillors were in agreement that these should be purchased when required and cannot wait for a meeting to approve the payment.

Proposed: Councillor Brendon

Seconded: Councillor Jones

All councillors present in agreement

- Bank signatories – clerk to chase applications.
- Internal Audit outcome Action Plan – this was discussed at the EOM in June. Concern was expressed over holding a credit card – the clerk has reviewed this alongside financial regulations. It is permissible to hold a council credit card but this requires a policy. Credit Card Policy had been drafted and circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. An amendment in Section 3 was proposed as spending should be restricted to £100 per month. Councillors in agreement to accept the policy.

Proposed: Councillor Brendon

Seconded: Councillor Chappell

All councillors present in agreement

Clerk to amend and put on the website.

ACTION: Clerk

Risk Assessment - this has now been drafted and circulated to councillors who were in agreement to accept. To be placed on website.

ACTION: Clerk

Budget monitoring – this now goes on all agendas and information circulated to all councillors prior to each meeting.

Accessibility of website – clerk to email provider to check it confirms with requirements.

ACTION: Clerk

- Replacement laptop – clerk to obtain quotes for next meeting in September
- External audit submission – clerk confirmed that AGAR had been submitted by deadline of 30.06.2026
- Next Finance, Personnel and Risk Committee meeting to be on 26 October to begin to draft the budget. Clerk to book room at hall.

ACTION: Clerk

07/18/26

Policy Review

- Credit Card Policy – see Minute 07/17/26 above
- Risk Assessment – new document which was adopted

07/19/26

Annual Village Meeting

- Councillor Jones advised the meeting was well attended.

07/20/26

Date of next meeting

Full Council Meeting - Monday 21 September 2026 at 1930 in the Marples Room at the Memorial Hall.

Finance, Personnel and Risk Committee meeting – Monday 26 October at 1930

Meeting closed at 2143

