

# DUNSTER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD At DUNSTER TITHE BARN ON Monday 08<sup>th</sup>  
December 2025 7.00pm

## Attendees

**Councillors:** Geoff Dibble (Chair), Carol Ell, Alan Vicary, Kevin Sully, Peter Finney, Tony Melnyk, Barbara Bryan and Steve Harris

**Clerk:** Mrs Sarah Towells

**Other:** Cara Strom (SC) and Colin McDonald (Affordable Housing officer)

## Apologies

**Councillors:** James Morley, Tessa Williams and Matt Griffiths

**Other:** Marcus Kravis (SC)

**Cllrs absent without apology:** None

Prior to the start of the meeting Colin McDonald addressed the Council regarding an online survey that will be happening during Feb/March 2026 regarding housing needs on Exmoor.

**25/200 To note apologies for absence:** As noted above.

**25/201 Any New Declarations of interest and dispensations:** There were none.

**25/202 Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 for approval:** It was resolved to approve the minutes.

**25/203 Somerset Councillor Report:** Cllr Strom reported she enjoyed judging the business and residential Christmas displays on Saturday morning during the Dunster Christmas festival weekend. She reported she was on the following committees at Somerset Council: Full Council, ENP authority, Quantock Hills Partnership, Hinkley Point C Monitoring group, Visit Exmoor Executive board, SC Scrutiny – Adults and heath and currently subbing for 2 months for Scrutiny corporate and finance. The Consultation on Somerset Council's Electoral Boundaries has reopened and will run until January 14<sup>th</sup> 2026. Traffic Signal Replacement at Dunster Junction is scheduled for Early 2026 – Somerset Council is set to replace aging traffic signals at the A39 due to the units reaching the end of their working life, as they are over 30 years old. Work will start 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and should be completed by April 2026. Contactor Centregreat has been appointed the project. During the works, an intelligent temporary traffic light system will minimize disruption while significant excavation work occurs to replace the old ducting, wiring and traffic light heads.

## **25/204 Accounts**

25/1204.1 Approval of expenditure: It was resolved to pay the payments on the attached list.

25/204.2 Current account expenditure analysis for November 2025: It was resolved to note the figures, and Cllr Finney would sign these.

25/204.3 Bank reconciliation for November 2025: It was resolved to note the bank reconciliation which would be signed by Cllr Finney.

25/204.4 Budget Monitoring: It was resolved to note the budget monitoring which would be signed by Cllr Finney.

25/204.5 PAYE figures for November 2025: It was resolved to note these were correct and a payment of £61.94 would be sent to HMRC.

25/204.6 To receive draft Finance Committee minutes of meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November; It was resolved to note the minutes.

25/204.7 Agree budget for 2026/27: Discussions took place regarding the draft budget. It was resolved to accept the recommendation of the finance committee and adopt the budget for 2026/27.

25/204.8 Agree precept for 2026/27: It was resolved to set the precept for 2026/27 at £49,000.

## **25/205 Planning:**

It was resolved to note there were no planning applications.

**25/206 Review of Asset Register:** It was resolved to note there were no updates.

**25/207 Toilets:**

25/207.1 Donation box: It was resolved to note the box had been delivered earlier today and further resolved to ask the builder to fix to the outside of the toilets.

25/208.2 Agree tender for toilet cleaning contract: It was resolved to note only one application had been received from KS cleaning at a cost of £550.00 per month. It was resolved to offer the contract on a 3 month trial period before committing to a 3 year contract.

**25/208 Cemetery's:**

25/208.1 Cemetery 3 – only one quote had been received for the potholes and therefore agreed that CJ Lynch would do the work. It was further resolved to get quotes from AP Farmer, G A Sully & Sons and Minehead Landscaping to create a new fence to match existing car park fence and new gate for the entrance to new cemetery and all other associated works.

**25/209 Allotments:** It was resolved there were still a few plots available.

**25/210 Buttercross Orchard:** Cllr Harris reported Ellicombe Manor would replace the dead tree with a new one from Triscombe nursery.

**25/211 Riverside Walk:** It was resolved to note the footpath had still not yet been repaired. It was further resolved to purchase a tin of stain for the benches along the Walk.

**25/212 Correspondence:**

25/212.1 Email from Andy Fay regarding the Memorial Hall: It was resolved to note Andy Fay was unable to attend the meeting so this would be deferred to the next meeting.

**25/213 Review of Risk Register:** It was resolved to note there were no updates.

**25/214 Neighbourhood plan:** It was resolved there was no update.

**25/215 Defibs:** The Clerk reported the electrician had been asked to fit the new Defib at Tim Ahern's shop. It was resolved the Clerk would chase the electrician as the defib had not yet been fitted.

**25/216 Highways:**

25/216.1 To receive the Highway Working Group Minutes from meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and agree terms of reference: It was resolved to note the meeting did not take place fully as it was not quorate but Cllrs Harris and Morley put together draft terms of reference. It was resolved to adopt the following terms of reference for the Highway Working group:

1. Name of Group - The Highways Working Group

2. Purpose/Role – to provide a focus for discussion concerning highway issues in Dunster

3. Aims and responsibilities

- Represent Dunster PC on Local Community Networks for Highways (Exmoor and West Somerset)

- Liaise with Somerset Council Highways officers to progress existing issues and seek information

- Represent the local community in Dunster

- To agree on proposed actions and present monthly to full council for approval

4. Membership/number of people – The working group will not consist of more than four councillors and The Clerk. Minimum required to be quorate is 3. The working group shall not be responsible for electing members and the election of members must take place annually by Full Council. Any vacancies occurring within the year must be filled by Full Council. Non-members of the group may attend the meeting with an invitation from the Chair of the group but will have no voting rights.

5. The group may invite anyone to meetings to get their input as long as it is relevant to the agenda, but they will have no voting rights.

6. Number of meetings held in a year – monthly, approximately one week before full council meeting

7. Elect a chair at first meeting of the Council year

8. Clear written minutes of meetings to go the Full Council along with any recommendations following every working group meeting.

9. The group has no other Powers.

10. Review Terms of Reference annually

The next meeting for the group would be held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm – Venue to be confirmed.

It was resolved to order a NO PARKING AT ANYTIME SIGN to go on the railings on the High Street as agreed with Somerset Highways.

25/216.2 To form a speed watch group: It was resolved to note Cllr Dibble had received 6 responses to join a speed watch group so far. It was resolved that this would appear on the agenda for the Highway working group going forward.

25/216.3 Report from West Somerset LCN Highway Group Meeting: It was resolved to note the report that Cllr Harris circulated after attending the meeting. It was further resolved to write to the LCN to support the reopening of the Blue Anchor to Watchet Road.

**25/217 Bike Racks:** The Clerk would continue to get quotes to fit the bike rack.

**25/218 To Agree Clerks annual pay increase:** The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It was resolved to award the Clerk with the annual pay increase and back date to April 2025.

**25/219 Items to Report:** There were none.

**25/220 Matters for the next meeting to be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026:**

Hanging baskets for the village

**25/221 Close Meeting:** The chairman declared the meeting closed 8.35 p.m.

Signed ..... Date.....