

Sampford Brett Parish Council

Meeting Minutes for 09 September 2026



Minutes of the Sampford Brett Parish Council meeting which took place on Wednesday 09 September 2026 at Sampford Brett Village Hall, beginning at 6.30pm.

Parish Councillors Present: Cllr Brian Martin (Chair), Cllr Jan Swan, Cllrs Nick Brodrick, Simon Miles and Julian Russell

In Attendance: 4 members of the public, Cllr H Davies, Somerset Council and Mrs T-A Biss (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

6.30pm - PRIOR TO THE START OF THE FORMAL MEETING:

- a) **Question and comments from members of the public**
None
- b) **Public Participation**
None
- c) **Reports from Somerset Councillors**
 - Introduction of POL-ED, an educational resource supporting schools with policing, citizenship and community safety learning.
 - Promotion of free school meal access and wider food-support schemes, ensuring eligible families are aware of entitlements and available assistance.
 - Launch of the new county-wide Revenues and Welfare system, replacing former district systems and improving consistency for Council Tax, Benefits and Business Rates.
 - Ongoing pressures in waste services due to a reduction in reprocessing capacity for fridges and freezers, affecting disposal turnaround times.
 - Continued engagement in Wessex Devolution discussions, exploring future regional service models and local government reform.
 - Notification of temporary road closures, including the A39 Williton–Washford works scheduled from 28 September to 30 October 2026, and Brendon Road, Watchet, works from 5 October to 13 November 2026, with details issued by Somerset Council Highways and published on the One.Network roadworks portal.

THE MEETING FORMALLY OPENED AT 6.45pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:¹

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Voller.

1.1 Written Resignation

The Chair reported that the Clerk had received a written resignation from Councillor Tracey Skinner prior to the meeting, effective immediately. The Chair expressed thanks for her service to the Council and the community. A casual vacancy now exists. The Clerk will notify Somerset Council Democratic Services and arrange for the statutory Notice of Vacancy to be published.

¹ Local Government Act 1972, Section 85(1)
Sampford Brett Parish Meeting
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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:²

None

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2026 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

4.1 Page 682, Item 9 – Traffic Speed Through Sampford Brett

A second report has been submitted to Somerset Council requesting an inspection of the junction at The Rocks and the main street, and asking that the worn line markings be considered for repainting (Report Reference: 1204733). A further report has also been submitted requesting clearance of the surface-water drains at Tower Hill, which are completely blocked by weeds (Report Reference: 1204735).

4.2 Page 683, Item 11.2 – Use of Facebook for Parish Council Communications

The Clerk will work with the Vice-Chair to set up the user.

4.3 Page 692, Item 6.2 – Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Incident – 8 June 2026

The metal signpost outside The Old School, which had been bent and rotated due to the impact, has been replaced by Somerset Council Highways

5. PLANNING

5.1 Application 3/28/26/011 -, Clover Paddocks, Weacombe Road, West Quantoxhead, TA4 4ED

Erection of a stable block comprising 2 No. stables, tack room, hay store and machinery store for private equestrian use

Full Planning Permission, Conditional Approval - Granted 01 July 2026

5.2 Application 3/28/26/003 – Sampford House, Manor Farm Lane, Sampford Brett, TA4 4JX

Installation of 14 photovoltaic panels and an electric vehicle charging point.

Full Planning Permission, Conditional Approval - Granted 17 July 2026

5.3 Application 3/28/24/008 – Tremont, 33 Tower Hill, Williton, TA4 4JR

Demolition of 1 No. dwelling with associated outbuildings and erection of 3 No. dwellings
Construction has commenced.

6. LOCAL PLAN – SAMPFORD BRETT SITE ALLOCATION

6.1 Somerset Council is preparing its **Local Plan 2045**, which will guide development across the county for the next two decades. As part of the evidence-gathering process, developers and landowners were invited to submit potential development sites during the 2025 Call for Sites. Two parcels of land in Sampford Brett were submitted and now appear in the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).

6.2 Inclusion in the HELAA **does not constitute a proposal or planning application**. It simply means the sites are being considered at an early stage as part of Somerset Council's long-term spatial strategy that may be "*suitable, available, and achievable for future development*". The HELAA assesses sites against constraints such as landscape, heritage, access and highways, flood risk, and infrastructure

² Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items (as set out within the Parish Council's Code of Conduct), and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that corresponds with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not prevent any later declarations)

capacity. At this stage, **no details are known** regarding the number of homes, type of development, or whether either site will appear in the draft Local Plan.

- 6.3 Discussion by the Parish Council will help ensure local context and constraints are understood, and initial comments may influence whether the sites progress to the next stage of the Local Plan process.

6.4 **Former Union Quarry Site, Tower Hill 3/28/09/002, 3/28/16/002 & 3/28/21/002**

Appeal Decision: APP/H3320/A/10/2122491

A single dwelling was allowed on appeal in 2010 under exceptional, one-off circumstances, including very low traffic generation and bespoke mitigation measures. The Inspector highlighted severe access constraints, noting that the track narrows to just over 2 metres, is shared with a public footpath, and cannot accommodate standard public service vehicles, including fire appliances. These limitations were considered tolerable only for a single dwelling and were not judged suitable for multi-unit development. The appeal provides no justification for HELAA allocation and confirms that the site cannot accommodate further residential development.

6.5 **Land east of Capton Road Applications: 3/28/13/003 & 3/28/12/002**

Appeal Decisions: APP/H3320/A/12/2181749 & APP/H3320/A/13/2202484

Both Planning Inspectors who considered appeals for development on land east of Capton Road (2013 and 2014) reached the same clear conclusion: the site is not a sustainable or suitable location for housing. They found that Sampford Brett has very limited facilities, that essential services lie in Williton, and that the connecting lanes—narrow, steep, unlit and without footways—are unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, leaving future residents wholly dependent on private cars. Both decisions also highlighted the substandard rural road network, where additional traffic would increase reversing manoeuvres and congestion, and noted the harmful urbanising impact on the village's rural fringe. Although the proposals included two affordable homes, Inspectors concluded that this benefit did not outweigh the significant and demonstrable harms. Importantly, both decisions confirmed that inclusion of the site in SHLAA/HELAA does not indicate suitability for allocation. Taken together, these consistent findings provide strong and enduring evidence that the site is inappropriate for development and should not be carried forward in the new Local Plan.

RESOLVED: *That the Clerk drafts a formal letter to Somerset Council outlining the Parish Council's position on the unsuitability of the Former Union Quarry Site, Tower Hill and the land east of Capton Road for development within the emerging Somerset Local Plan. The draft will be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice Chair prior to submission.*

Proposed: Cllr Swan **Seconded:** Cllr Russell **Agreed unanimously.**

7. **GAS CANISTER DISPOSAL CHARGE – SAFETY CONCERNS**

Somerset Council's contractor, Biffa, introduced disposal charges in April 2026 for all gas canisters under 1kg, including small camping stove canisters such as the Campingaz CP250. These pressurised containers require specialist handling and cannot be placed in kerbside collections due to fire and explosion risks.

7.1 **Concerns raised by Cllr Russell:**

- The disposal charge is considered disproportionate, with a small canister costing around £1.50 to buy but £3.50 to dispose of safely.
- Families visiting West Somerset may use 3–4 canisters over a weekend, creating a significant cumulative cost and making safe disposal unlikely.
- The charge may result in canisters being placed in household general waste, dumped in hedgerows, or contributing to fly-tipping.
- Incorrect disposal presents a serious fire and explosion risk to collection crews, vehicles, waste facilities, and the countryside.

- Current heat, drought and tinder-dry conditions heighten the danger, with even one discarded canister potentially igniting a verge or field.
- The policy contradicts advice issued by Somerset Council in 2023, when small canisters were not subject to disposal fees.
- There is concern that the decision may lead to increased incidents and harm, prompting a request that Somerset Council reconsider the charging policy.

Cllr Russell also noted that other local authorities do not apply similar charges: Bristol and Cornwall Councils do not charge, and Devon Council allows up to five canisters to be disposed of free of charge.

RESOLVED: *That the Clerk writes to Somerset Council outlining the Parish Council's concerns regarding the disposal charge for small gas canisters, particularly the increased wildfire risk arising from inappropriate disposal during current dry conditions. The letter shall also request information on whether the number of canisters being correctly disposed of at recycling centres has reduced since the introduction of the charge.*

Proposed: Cllr Russell **Seconded:** Cllr Swan **Agreed unanimously**

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

- 8.1 Bus Stop Seat** - The seat next to the bus stop has had its rotten slats repaired. The Council wished to thank the parishioner who carried out the work.
- 8.2 "50 years Celebration"** - The events celebrating the Village Hall's 50th year were well structured and enjoyed by those in attendance.
- 8.3 Book Exchange** - Thanks to Diane Brooks for taking over the responsibilities of the "Book Exchange", it is very much appreciated and looks well organized.
- 8.4 Cold Calling Activity** - The Council received information about individuals offering roof and driveway cleaning services door-to-door. While recognising that many legitimate businesses operate in this way, members expressed concern that some residents may feel obliged to accept services or pay higher costs than anticipated. The Council wished to remind parishioners to be mindful of unsolicited offers and to look out for one another, particularly neighbours who might welcome a supportive word, and asked the Clerk to prepare a notice (within legislation) for residents, to be approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair prior to publication.

9. UPDATE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

9.1 Defibrillator/Bleed Kit – Cllr S Miles

The defibrillator and bleed kit have not been used since the last meeting. It was agreed that Cllr Miles will arrange defibrillator training/refresher in the coming months.

9.2 Footpaths & Rights of Way – Cllr N Brodrick

No matters to report at present.

9.3 Village Hall Liaison – Cllr S Voller

Cllr Voller had submitted a report which was circulated to Members prior to the meeting. The Charity Commission has confirmed that Charity No. 1215754 is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This CIO now forms the new legal entity for Sampford Brett Village Hall, replacing the previous unincorporated charity structure (Charity No. 268277). The CIO is therefore the body responsible for the hall's assets, insurance, contracts, and governance going forward.

9.4 Emergency Response – Cllr B Martin

A detailed report from Cllr Martin was circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

- **Volunteer Activity:** Path, verge, and stream clearance took place on 22 August, with 11 volunteers completing the work in approximately 90 minutes. The 15 drain-marking triangles were repainted during August.
- **Wildfire Incident:** A wildfire at Manor Farm on 24 August required attendance from fire crews. No livestock or properties were affected, and volunteer support was not required.
- **Drought and High Temperatures:** Cllr Martin highlighted the impact of the prolonged drought. Updates have been added to the Emergency Plan to ensure checks on vulnerable or isolated residents during extended periods of high temperatures.
- **Emergency Plan Additions:** Proposed additions to the Emergency Plan were presented, covering high temperatures/drought, epidemics and pandemics, fire, and wildfires.
- **Rainfall Report:** No rainfall was recorded in July, and only 153.32 mm fell between April and August. A hosepipe ban has been in force since 17 August.

9.4.1 Proposed additions to the Emergency Plan were presented, covering high temperatures/drought, fire, and wildfires, with triggers and actions set out

RESOLVED: *That the Parish Council approves the proposed additions to the Emergency Plan covering high temperatures and drought, fire, and wildfires, with triggers and actions as set out in the Emergency Coordinator's report.*

Proposed: Cllr Swan **Seconded:** Cllr Brodrick **Agreed unanimously.**

9.5 Local Community Network – Cllrs Swan

No report as meeting attended by Cllr Skinner.

9.5.1 Somerset Connectivity and Integrated Transport Strategy (SCITS)

Somerset Council is developing the Somerset Connectivity and Integrated Transport Strategy (SCITS), a long-term plan to improve transport links across the county over the next 20–30 years. The strategy identifies nine major transport corridors connecting key settlements and outlines existing infrastructure, challenges, completed and upcoming schemes, and future opportunities.

Stakeholders, including Parish Councils and LCNs, are invited to review the corridor most relevant to their area and provide feedback via the CitizenSpace questionnaire. This stage is a high-level review of corridors rather than detailed routes, and multiple responses from an organisation are permitted. Responses will help shape the next phase of the strategy, with further engagement planned as the work progresses.

RESOLVED: *That, due to the short timeframe for response (11 September 2026) and the fact that the questionnaire cannot be downloaded for prior review, that completion of the questionnaire be delegated to Cllr Swan including comments regarding the link from Wiveliscombe to Williton.*

Proposed: Cllr Martin **Seconded:** Cllr Brodrick **Agreed unanimously.**

10. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

Council reviewed the following statutory and governance documents:

10.1 The Financial Regulations (reviewed Sept 2025)

RESOLVED: That following amendments to item 2.7 to add “records on any *dedicated* council computer” and to item 5.2 to correct “The ~~Clerk~~ Clerk”, the Financial Regulations were approved.

Proposed: Cllr Swan **Seconded:** Cllr Brodrick **Agreed unanimously.**

10.2 Risk Register (reviewed Sept 2025)

RESOLVED: Deferred for Cllrs Martin and Swan to cross-reference with the Emergency Plan, with the item to be brought back to the next meeting.

10.3 Complaints Procedure: How Sampford Brett Parish Council Handles Public Complaints (draft Sep 2026)

RESOLVED: Deferred for Cllrs Martin and Swan to clarify wording within item 2 Scope, with the item to be brought back to the next meeting.

10.4 Councillor Communication Protocol – Contact with External Agencies (draft Sept 2026)

RESOLVED: Deferred to allow Cllr Swan to confirm the proposed wording ensuring councillors may formally represent and speak on behalf of Sampford Brett Parish Council when authorised by resolution. The item will be brought back to the next meeting for approval.

10.5 Disciplinary Policy (draft Sept 2026)

RESOLVED: Adopted

Proposed: Cllr Swan **Seconded:** Cllr Miles **Agreed unanimously.**

10.6 Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme (draft Sept 2026)

RESOLVED: Adopted

Proposed: Cllr Martin **Seconded:** Cllr Russell **Agreed unanimously.**

10.7 Grievance Policy (draft Sept 2026)

RESOLVED: Adopted

Proposed: Cllr Martin **Seconded:** Cllr Russell **Agreed unanimously.**

11. FINANCIAL BUSINESS 2026–2027**11.1 Current Financial Position as of 31 August 2026**

REVENUE BREAKDOWN			
Brought Forward			
Net Bank Balance as of 31 March 2026	£4,726.67		AGAR Section 2(1)
Gross Income			
Precept - Received 09 April 2026	£5,000.00		AGAR Section 2 (2)
VAT 126 Claim			
	£5,000.00		Gross Income
EXPENDITURE			
Staff	523.78		AGAR Section 2 (4)
Other	£1,498.82		AGAR Section 2 (6)
	£2,022.60		Current Gross Expenditure
BROUGHT FORWARD +INCOME - EXPENDITURE	£7,704.07		Net Banked Balance as 31 August 2026
BANK RECONCILIATION			
	£7,704.07		
Less any un-presented cheques	£0.00		
Less: Petty cash float (if applicable)	£0.00		
Add: any un-banked cash	£0.00		
Net Banked Balance	£7,704.07		AGAR Section 2 (7)

EXPENDITURE				
Category	Actual	Budget	Remaining	Comments
Bank Charges	£22.75	£60.00	£37.25	Average charge per month under £5.00
Election 2027		500.00	£500.00	Awaiting confirmation - Somerset Council
Emergency Provision	£239.99	£500.00	£260.01	Defibrillator- Pad/Batteries; Bleed Kit
GOV.UK email		£350.00	£350.00	.gov Email £99+VAT per annum + £2 x 8 pm
Grants	£150.00	£250.00	£100.00	Flood Group; Churchyard Maintenance
Hall Hire	£42.00	£150.00	£108.00	Meeting Venue
Insurance	£418.24	£500.00	£81.76	Legally required to hold appropriate insurance
Internal Audit	£35.00	£35.00	£0.00	Legally required of a yearly internal audit
Maintenance of Assets		£150.00	£150.00	Provision for repairs
Membership	£152.64	£190.00	£37.36	SALC & NALC Membership
Office Equipment/Stationery		£50.00	£50.00	
Service Agreements	£403.20	£770.00	£366.80	Website & Dog Waste Bin
Staff Wages	£523.78	£3,030.00	£2,506.22	207 hrs + % cover NJC Salary Award (Apr 26)
Training	£35.00	£120.00	£85.00	Councillors' & Clerk Training
TOTAL	£2,022.60	£6,655.00	£4,632.40	

11.2 Schedule of Income and Payments as of 31 August 2026

PO No.	Invoice No.	Payee	Description of Goods	Total	Action Required
PO26008	Wages	Mrs T-A Biss	Clerk's Wages Apr-Jun 2026	£1,323.79	Authorisation
Total:				£1,323.79	

RESOLVED: To authorise the Schedule of Income and Payments dated 31 August 2026.

Proposed: Cllr Swan **Seconded:** Cllr Brodrick **Agreed unanimously.**

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 09 December 2026, Village Hall, prompt start at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm and the Chair thanked all those in attendance.

Chairman's Signature: _____

Date: _____