

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting
held on June 9th at the Sampford Arundel Parish Rooms

In the absence of the chairman, vice-chairman Councillor Hill led the meeting

[A] Apologies and attendance

[1] Apologies were received from Councillor Lane, Somerset Councillor Wren and PCSO Steve Hill.

[2] There were no members of the public present

[B] Issues raised by members of the public

[1] Parking improvements at Culmstock Beacon had been raised before the meeting with the clerk by email. There was much discussion over the matter and the site had been previously visited. It was agreed that further visits may take place in different weather conditions before a decision can be made. This would clarify some outstanding details.

ACTION: The clerk to contact the resident and place on the July agenda.

DONE: June 9th

Item 1: There were no disclosures of interest by members on agenda items

Item 2: Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record

Item 3: Matters arising from the previous minutes to include:

[a] Signage at the A38/Holywell Lake Junction. Outstanding issues with the signs, for example misspellings, had been corrected. The parish council has agreed to maintain the traditional fingerpost.

ACTION: Two council representatives will attend to repainting the sign

DONE: [date to be inserted on completion of task]

[b] Speed indicator devices at Ford Street and Holywell Lake. The clerk had had no success in accessing an agreed grant from the police authority despite numerous attempts, and applications for resubmission were closed in April 2025. It was agreed therefore to consider self-funding as the traffic situation in both sites is worsening. The clerk has liaised with Traffic Management over any necessary legal agreements and a meeting would be held between the clerk, the Highways Engineer and any interested councillor within the next few weeks to ascertain suitable sitings in both areas. A supplier had agreed to provide two solar powered units for the price of a single unit and the clerk would liaise with them over the delivery and ask for quotes for installation.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Kate Brown, Highways Engineer for a meeting to ascertain suitable sites and to confirm whether the data from speed monitoring supports the installations

DONE: [date to be inserted on completion of task]

NB: The clerk will contact all councillors regarding the visit dates

[c] Declaration of acceptance of office. One register needed to be signed. The clerk apologised for mislaying the form in question.

ACTION: The clerk to deliver the appropriate form to the councillor

DONE: June 9th by email. A copy will be delivered by hand

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[d] Register of Interests. These were checked and all found to be in order.

Item 4: Police Liaison

[a] The police report mentioned one act of criminal damage in the parish. The clerk mentioned the recent vehicle damage at the Monument car park with all tyres slashed, and the theft of materials and tools at a residence in Ford Street. Further losses from this latter site have since been identified. Sympathy was extended to those involved and parishioners are asked to report suspicious activity to the police.

[b] There has also unfortunately been a spate of thefts on the Blackdown Hills, outside our parish.

Item 5: Planning, Infrastructure and Development

[a] Refurbishment of M5 Junction 26 and link road to Wellington. This necessity, and the operational procedures planned, were discussed at some length with a mixture of relief that the road was finally being improved but concern that some businesses may be affected by the months long closure. Traffic redirection may have a considerable effect on the A38 and surrounding roads. The clerk has received regular communication from the Council.

Item 6: Financial Issues

[a] Zurich Annual Insurance, transaction E5 was signed for approval at £264

[b] The Annual Audit has been carried out successfully and all was in order.

Transaction E6 for the audit fee was signed for approval at £175

[c] Churchyard grant. It was agreed to support the Church with a grant of £750

ACTION: The Clerk to arrange transfer of funds

DONE: June 10th

[f] Reimbursement to the clerk of £50 for the Annual Meeting room hire fee transaction E7 was agreed and duly signed

ACTION: The clerk to arrange payment

DONE: June 10th

[g] Q1 clerk's salary, administration allowance and HMRC payments transactions E8, E9 and E10 were approved and signed

ACTION: The Clerk to arrange any necessary payment

DONE: June 10th

Item 7: County, District and Unitary Authority Councillors.

[a] Councillor Mansell outlined the local support work on public transport and praised the efforts of those involved. The group is active in the area and should any councillor wish to attend they would be made welcome.

[b] Councillor Mansell is involved in the working group considering boundary proposals for the next round of county council elections in 2027. There is a suggestion that the present number of councillors at 110 would be reduced to 96, all in single member wards. Our "area" may link more towards Wellington. The consultation end in August. More information can be found on the Boundary Commission website.

ACTION: Place on the July agenda

DONE: June 9th

[c] The Government is presently in the process of changing planning rules, which may affect local decision making, and as an alternative becoming more consultative

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Item 8: Any other urgent business

[a] Defibrillator at Holywell Lake. A request had been received to support the installation of a defibrillator in Holywell Lake. This was very well received and it was agreed to seek more information regarding costs before a final decision is made in July

ACTION: The clerk to contact the parishioner to seek that information

DONE: June 9th and a grateful reply received June 10th

ACTION: Place on the July agenda

DONE: June 9th

[b] Blackdown Hills Association. It had been agreed in March that the Parish Council would renew its membership of the Association. It was agreed that the clerk would forward a £25 contribution in lieu of membership fees

ACTION: Clerk to arrange payment and liaise with the Association Officers at a meeting later in the month

DONE: June 10th

[c] Councillor Mansell mentioned the Wellington/ Wiveliscombe bus user group and it was agreed to revisit this for a wider discussion in July

ACTION: Place on the July agenda

DONE: June 9th

[d] Councillor Olive agreed to research access details for parishioners

Date of the next meeting: July 14th at Sampford Arundel Parish rooms