



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on January 6th 2026

[A] Apologies were received from Councillor Hasell and Somerset Councillor Wren

[B] Issues raised by members of the public.

A welcome was extended to the Mayor of Wellington, Councillor Janet Lloyd and numerous parishioners.

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

[a] Dog waste bin at Higher Wrangway. The waste bin has been installed and is very much in use! The Council will cover the weekly disposal costs, which may need to be increased to twice weekly. This will incur unexpected expenditure, which will have to be planned for. However, the cost of installation will be covered by Mr Simon Roass and another generous parishioner, for which the council is very grateful. Invoices for both are not expected until March 2026.

[b] Salary and HMRC payments. The Council's payroll officer sent a helpful explanation to all councillors explaining the regulations pertinent to the council as an employer and the clerk as an employee. It was suggested by Councillor Frear that the clerk receive a salary increase, and the council was in favour. The clerk was duly grateful and agreed to contact the payroll officer for proposals.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the payroll officer. DONE: 7th January

[c] Lorry routes. The clerk has discussed the issue with both the police and the Highways department. There are signs indicating a preferred lorry route avoiding Ford Street and Wellington Hill in particular. Following a number of issues with lorries on Wellington Hill the police have appointed a member of their traffic team to look at the problem. Unfortunately the preferred route is not on satellite navigation systems and this compounds the problem even for local contractors who hopefully are aware.

[d] Holywell Lake defibrillator. It was noted that the raising of funds for the defibrillator had been successful and the Council congratulates the organiser for her dedication and hard work. The council will place a link on the website to nearby units.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the organiser to request name of the "guardian" who will undertake the necessary regular checks

Item 4: Police Liaison. No report has been received again, which is disappointing. It was agreed to contact the police to request regular information particularly in view of item 8f below.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the police

Wellington Without Parish Council

Item 5: Planning, Infrastructure and Development

[a] Application 44/25/0013: 250 homes south of Oldway Road. The clerk, chair and Councillor Olive and Frear had attended a meeting at Wellington Town Council the previous evening where much opposition had been expressed against this planning application. Thanks were extended to the public present and the Mayor of Wellington for much feedback given this evening. The comments covered a wide range of practical concerns against approval of the application. These included such as waste water and sewage treatment, access to schools across the busy A38, flooding, additional strain on the single medical centre, the loss of the natural boundary to the town and many others. The town infrastructure will be under substantial pressure from this development. Would it not be better to complete those developments already in progress before considering others? All arguments from both the public and councillors will be considered carefully by Council before any final submission can be made.

The clerk had sought an extension of the submission date to March 16th to allow sufficient time for full and proper consultation with parishioners of both Wellington Without and Wellington Town. This was not approved but an extension for both councils to February 6th was approved. Wellington Without Parish Council will consider the issue and finalise it at the next meeting on February 3rd. The council will be objecting most vigorously on many grounds. If any member of the public wishes to forward any comments to assist please do so as soon as possible to wwpcclerk@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE that the date for public consultation has NOT been extended and all submissions must be in by the 16th of January.

Item 6: Financial Issues

[a] Precept request return. In view of the recent initiatives in the parish and associated longer-term financial commitments, plus potential legal fees from the planning issues, a rise in the precept from £8500 to £9000 has been agreed.

Proposer: Councillor Hill Secunder: Councillor Olive

ACTION: The clerk to forward the appropriate form DONE: 7 th January

[b] Third quarter reconciliation. The ledger and bank accounts are in balance at £11925.41

Item 7: County, District and Unitary Authority Councillors

Councillor Wren: The Local Government Settlement has not helped Somerset as much as had been hoped.

SEND Deficits: Government have stated that they will directly fund SEND from April 2028 but there is no solution yet for historic DSG deficits (estimated nationally at £14bn by 2028/29). This gives rise to a significant risk of a Section 114 unless Government provide support. The Somerset deficit is c £100m. If we were asked to cover it, it would mean instant insolvency.

Somerset-Specific Impact

- Business Rates Baseline (BRB): £126.4m vs Baseline Funding Level (BFL): £112.1m. Business Rates have been reset so that growth locally since 2013 is now redistributed. We will have to hand over c£14m for redistribution to poorer Councils.

Wellington Without Parish Council

Core Spending Power

- Somerset's Core Spending Power rises from £653.6m (2025/26) to £684.95m (2026/27), with further increases projected to 2028/29. 97% of the increase in Somerset's Core Spending Power comes from Council Tax increases.

Budget Gap

- Gap reduced from £101m (March 2025) to £54.9m after PLGFS adjustments. This accounts for half of our structural deficit.
- Remaining gap to be addressed through one-off measures, savings, and transformation.

Overall Message The settlement provides short-term stability and some redistribution but leaves unresolved structural issues—particularly SEND deficits and Somerset's outflow of business rates. While the budget gap has narrowed, significant challenges remain for medium-term financial sustainability.

Item 8: Any other urgent business

[a] Recycling collection. The clerk had had an informal meeting with a recycling operative. The latter explained the issues with the lorry design regarding the disposal of both paper and cardboard and the time at each stop to separate both. He requested that if possible we remind residents to try to keep paper and cardboard separated in the recycling box to speed up the process

[b] Future dates for the meeting room. After some discussion a list of preferred dates was drawn up and the clerk will contact the organiser of the Parish Hall to book these if possible.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the booking clerk. **DONE:** 7th January

[c] Clearing of ditches along Briscoe Lane. The maintenance of the verges along Briscoe Lane and most recently the clearing of the ditches to prevent flooding have been carried out by David and James Appleby. The councillors appreciate the work as do many local residents and a letter of gratitude will be forwarded

ACTION: The clerk to forward the letter **DONE:** 7th January

[d] Speed Indicator Devices. At present the council awaits the erection of suitable poles before the system can be put into operation. The clerk, as the relevant organiser, will be reintroducing Speedwatch in Ford Street after the installation of the speed indicator devices to reinforce their use. The police have been informed.

[e] Following a potential accident between a pedestrian and a speeding van the traffic police have agreed to undertake some monitoring of the speeding in Ford Street, which could result in prosecution.

[f] Parishioners are urged to take suitable precautions and maintain vigilance in the light of at least three break-ins or attempted thefts in the parish.

[g] There has been significant flooding at the A38/Ford Street junction where there appear to be drains but they are not functional. In addition Ford Street hill has been quite dangerous with regard to icy conditions. It was considered important that this road ought to be gritted.

ACTION: The clerk will contact Highways re both issues in 8g above

Date of the next meeting: February 3rd at Sampford Arundel Parish rooms at 7.00pm

Wellington Without Parish Council

Signed as a true and accurate statement:

February 3rd