

MINUTES OF NETHER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 14 JULY 2025 AT 7.00pm
AT ST MARYS CHURCH CENTRE

Present: Parish Councillors John Roberts (Chairman)
 Lesley Bowditch
 Colin Falla
 Kevin Ferriday
 Margaret Hogg

In Attendance: Caro Slaymaker (Parish Clerk)
 Cllr Mike Caswell (Somerset Council)
 Three members of the public

6369 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Jeanes. His absence, for reasons given, was **approved**. Cllr Bolt had also sent apologies.

6370 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

6371 Public Session

No issues raised.

6372 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 June were **approved** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

6373 Somerset Council Liaison

Councillor Caswell reported that work on the A39 Cokerhurst Farm development site would include night time working, a 10mph speed limit and some escorted journeys to install the new traffic lights.

Somerset River Authority was offering small grants for works to help alleviate flooding.

As was well known, Somerset Council had a chronic lack of money and he found some of their spending choices disappointing. He understood the Parish and Town Councils were being asked to do more which was wrong as it meant residents were paying twice.

6374 Christmas Lights

It was **agreed** to increase the amount previously agreed to purchase new Christmas Lights by around £500. Proposed Cllr Hogg, seconded Cllr Ferriday, unanimous.

6375 Nether Stowey United Charity

It was **agreed** to reappoint Mr Trout and Mrs Erskine as the Council's nominated Trustees for a further period of four years.

6376 Dowsborough Local Community Network

The Chairman had circulated a report giving an overview of the current LCN arrangements, in which he expressed his dissatisfaction with the situation. Cllr Ferriday concurred. He reported that there had been a meeting last week between Somerset Council and Dr Jones, the CEO of the Somerset Association of Local Councils. There was some support for withdrawing from the LCN, but it was agreed to consider the matter further at the next meeting, when Dr Jones had reported.

6377 Local Government Boundary Commission

It was agreed that the proposal for Nether Stowey to be moved into a new ward of mainly West Somerset parishes was less than ideal, but it was **agreed** not to send a formal response.

6378 Cemetery Shed

It was **agreed** to offer up to £300 towards the roof repairs (half the total) since it was the Council's building and their responsibility.

6379 Financial Management

- a) The Budget and Reserves Report for the year to 10 July was noted. A copy of the report is appended to these minutes.
- b) Expenditure incurred since 10 June. The expenditure was approved and any two of the authorised signatories were instructed to sign the relevant cheques/authorise online payments (proposed Cllr Hogg, seconded Cllr Bowditch). The expenditure list is appended to these minutes.
- c) The bank reconciliations were **noted**. Cllr Roberts had carried out the reconciliation and voucher check and was satisfied all was in order.

6380 Highways

The Clerk had circulated details of Somerset Council's new Volunteer Highway Maintenance which had caused some anxiety. Further information received from a more senior source in Somerset Council conflicted with the original information provided. The Clerk would attend the Clerks' Working Group meeting on 16 July where there would be a presentation and, it was hoped, some clarification.

6381 Chairman's Report

The Chairman had attended two Hinkley Point meetings. There was an update to the DCO and they were pausing work on saltmarsh mitigation while they examined a new acoustic fish deterrent technology.

HPC and Somerset Council were working on a topic paper in connection with the increased workforce.. Although they had been working on this for nearly two years, there had been no consultation as yet and parking issues had not been considered. The papers would not be available until September with a decision due at the end of the year.

There was a planning issue in Wick where two landowners were renting land for car parking for workers. Following complaints, the landowners had been told to apply for planning permission. The Chairman was concerned that landowners in Nether Stowey may consider doing the same.

HPC had eased control of passengers getting on workers' buses. There was some concern that this could lead to security issues, if non-workers could board buses unchecked.

6382 Clerk's Report

No interest/applications from would-be Councillors in response to the vacancy ad for now three vacancies.

The Clerk had received an e-mail from a member of the public who wished her to pass on his thanks to the Parish Council for restoring the fingerpost. The Chairman had replied to him.

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6383 Members Reports

LCN meeting: the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had attended the AGM on 18 June. Cllr Morgan (Stogursey PC) had been elected Chairman, with Cllr Caswell as Vice-Chairman. The next meeting was in September.

NS Village Hall and Recreation Ground: Cllr Bowditch reported that, despite early concerns about the weather, it had been a successful event. Although final accounts had to be completed, she thought FoNSS had made about £2,500 and the Playing Field about £1,000.

Quantock Hills NL: the next meeting was later in July.

Thomas Poole Library: the next meeting was in August.

Nether Stowey School: Cllr Bowditch reported that the Headteacher, Mrs Holt, would leave in July and Mr Luke be acting Head until Mrs Holt's successor is appointed.

6384 Forthcoming Events

- Wed 16 July – SC Clerks' Forum
- Wed 23 July – QH NL JAC meeting
- Wed 20 August – SC Clerks' Forum
- Wed 17 Sept – LCN meeting
- Thurs 18 Sept – HPC Community Forum
- Tues 23 Sept – HP SSG meeting

6385 Next Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Meeting would be held on **Monday 8 September** at the Church Centre at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Minute 6362 b – Expenditure incurred since 10 June 2025

The expenditure was **approved** and any two of the authorised signatories were instructed to sign the relevant cheques/authorise online payments (proposed Cllr Hogg, seconded Cllr Bowditch).

Date	Payee Name	Cheque	Amount	Transaction Details
10 June	J H Hopkins	OL 1006	135.34	Village cleaning (June)
10 June	WJ Roberts	OL 1006/2	250.00	Chairman's Honorarium
11 June	NS VH + RG	OL 1106	450.00	Grant for DJ for Party in the Park
12 June	Via Amazon	card	12.74	Hi-vis jackets
13 June	CJ Lynch & Sons Ltd	OL 1306	3,780.00	Fingerpost groundworks
13 June	Santander	CHG	1.70	Account 3 charges (May transactions)
17 June	Water2business	DD	106.86	Office water/sewage Nov 24 -June 25
20 June	Risdons Solicitors	OL 2006	350.00	Office rent (15 June) replacement payment
23 June	WJ Roberts	OL 2006/2	27.90	Mileage claim (Somerset Forge/fingerpost)
23 June	Staff Payroll	OL 2306	2,584.84	Staff Payroll (June)
25 June	BT Business	DD	58.74	Office phone/broadband (bill of 25 June)
3 July	EDF Energy	DD	65.94	Public Toilets electricity (July)
3 July	EDF Energy	DD	220.00	Office electricity (July)
3 July	EDF Energy	DD	23.83	Clock Tower electricity (July)
3 July	GWB Services	OL 0307	1,258.20	Village maintenance + bins (June)
9 July	HSD Online	card	68.28	Bulk toilet rolls (public toilets)
10 July	Somerset Council	DD	52.00	Cemetery rates (July)
10 July	Somerset Council	DD	274.00	Office rates (July)
15 July	Microsoft	card	4.56	Microsoft OneDrive (July)
15 July	Risdons Solicitors	SO	350.00	Office rent (15 July)
31 July	Unity Trust Bank	CHG	6.00	Account 4 service fee (June transactions)
Total Expenditure			£ 10,080.93	

Budget Report 2025/2026
as at 10 July 2025

Income	Outturn at 31 Mar 2025	Budget 2025/26	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	First quarter	July 2025	Second quarter	Total income to date	% of budget
1002 Allotment Rental	100.00	100.00								0.0%
1004 Bank Interest	2,937.39	2,500.00			747.18	747.18			747.18	29.9%
1006 Cemetery Income	4,713.69	4,400.00	780.00	386.87		1,166.87			1,166.87	26.5%
1009 Miscellaneous Income	454.58		35.00		10.00	45.00	84.00	84.00	129.00	**
1010 Grants received					840.00	840.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,840.00	**
1011 Precept	71,995.00	76,248.00	76,248.00			76,248.00			76,248.00	100.0%
1012 Printing & Copying receipts	130.98	65.00			45.70	45.70			45.70	70.3%
Subtotal Budget Income for Year	80,331.64	83,313.00	77,063.00	386.87	1,642.88	79,092.75	2,084.00	2,084.00	81,176.75	97.4%
1005 Comm Infrastructure Levy	8,155.09									**
115 VAT Refunds	3,856.88			676.40		676.40	2,544.11	2,544.11	3,220.51	**
Subtotal Non-budget income	12,011.97			676.40		676.40	2,544.11	2,544.11	3,220.51	**
TOTAL All income	92,343.61	83,313.00	77,063.00	1,063.27	1,642.88	79,769.15	4,628.11	4,628.11	84,397.26	

Expenditure	Outturn at 31 Mar 2025	Budget 2025/26	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	First quarter	July 2025	Second quarter	Total expend to date	% of budget
Parish Office										
4101 Office Rent and supplies	4,301.37	4,580.00	350.00	351.25	350.00	1,051.25	350.00	350.00	1,401.25	30.6%
4102 Office utilities and rates	3,983.42	4,700.00	388.43	645.65	593.72	1,627.80	487.78	487.78	2,115.58	45.0%
4103 Postage		30.00								0.0%
4104 Stationery + equipment	138.70	125.00		7.00		7.00			7.00	5.6%
4105 Telephone & Broadband	548.94	600.00	93.90	48.95	48.95	191.80			191.80	32.0%
4106 Website + IT costs	625.56	810.00	206.80	3.80	43.80	254.40			254.40	31.4%
4108 Printing costs	192.96	220.00		37.90		37.90			37.90	17.2%
4109 Office Miscellaneous	778.80		7.00		10.62	17.62			17.62	**
TOTAL Parish Office	10,569.75	11,065.00	1,046.13	1,094.55	1,047.09	3,187.77	837.78	837.78	4,025.55	36.4%
Staff Costs										
4201 Salaries	29,696.30	33,000.00	2,584.84	2,584.84	2,584.84	7,754.52			7,754.52	23.5%
4202 Staff travel and expenses	14.40	60.00								0.0%

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Expenditure	Outturn at 31 Mar 2025	Budget 2025/26	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	First quarter	July 2025	Second quarter	Total expend to date	% of budget
Staff Costs (continued)										**
4203 Staff Training	98.70	80.00								0.0%
TOTAL Staff Costs	29,809.40	33,140.00	2,584.84	2,584.84	2,584.84	7,754.52			7,754.52	23.4%
Administration & Finance										
4301 Audit Fees	609.50	625.00			304.00	304.00			304.00	48.6%
4302 Bank charges	89.65	103.00	7.70	7.40	7.70	22.80	6.00	6.00	28.80	28.0%
4303 Chairman's Honorarium	250.00	250.00			250.00	250.00			250.00	100.0%
4304 C/llrs' Expenses/training	320.66	330.00	78.00		27.90	105.90			105.90	32.1%
4306 Elections		235.00								0.0%
4307 Insurance	1,185.26	1,370.00		1,224.79		1,224.79			1,224.79	89.4%
4308 Statutory Fees	35.00	35.00								0.0%
4309 Subscriptions	700.51	965.00	705.47			705.47			705.47	73.1%
4310 Meeting room hire	351.00	420.00	112.00			112.00			112.00	26.7%
TOTAL Administration & Finance	3,541.58	4,333.00	903.17	1,232.19	589.60	2,724.96	6.00	6.00	2,730.96	63.0%
Cemetery										
4402 Cemetery Rates	364.27	385.00	52.27	52.00	52.00	156.27	52.00	52.00	208.27	54.1%
4403 Maintenance + bins	5,549.27	6,573.00		1,135.38	540.00	1,675.38	270.00	270.00	1,945.38	29.6%
TOTAL Cemetery	5,913.54	6,958.00	52.27	1,187.38	592.00	1,831.65	322.00	322.00	2,153.65	31.0%
Community Services										
4501 Christmas Tree & Lights	253.99	1,120.00								0.0%
4502 Allotment	100.00	100.00								0.0%
4504 Support for tourism		200.00								0.0%
4505 Defibrillator		425.00	135.00	15.35		150.35			150.35	35.4%
TOTAL Community Services	353.99	1,420.00	135.00	15.35		150.35			150.35	10.6%
Village Maintenance										
4601 A39 Verge	1,176.00	1,195.00		108.00	108.00	216.00			216.00	18.1%
4602 Clock Tower Maintenance	699.00	420.00								0.0%
4603 Clock Tower Electricity	221.67	245.00	18.00	22.90	22.96	63.86	22.71	22.71	86.57	35.3%
4604 General Maintenance	518.99	1,100.00		1,465.35	2.95	1,468.30			1,468.30	133.5%
4605 The Cross, Gaol and WM	209.41	670.00		14.00	4,639.99	4,653.99			4,653.99	694.6%
4606 Palmers Path	384.00	550.00		27.00	54.00	81.00	27.00	27.00	108.00	19.6%
4607 Public Seating	740.48	2,230.00								0.0%

Budget Report 2025/2026
as at 10 July 2025

Expenditure	Outturn at 31 Mar 2025	Budget 2025/26	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	First quarter	July 2025	Second quarter	Total expend to date	% of budget
<i>Village Maintenance (continued)</i>										**
4608 Public Footpaths	192.00	270.00			54.00	54.00	108.00	108.00	162.00	60.0%
4609 Waste services	892.32	2,028.00	32.43		49.50	81.93	22.00	22.00	103.93	5.1%
4610 Coleridge Road	240.00	320.00		54.00	108.00	162.00	27.00	27.00	189.00	59.1%
4611 Millennium Wood	48.00	166.00								0.0%
4612 Plot 173	960.00	1,150.00			216.00	216.00	81.00	81.00	297.00	25.8%
4613 Mill Lane/Lime Street maint	811.55	1,350.00		14.70	20.33	35.03	81.00	81.00	116.03	8.6%
4614 New grass cutting areas	1,512.00	1,700.00		202.50	459.00	661.50	202.50	202.50	864.00	50.8%
4616 Clock Tower major works		1,000.00								0.0%
4617 Parson Cl play area	456.00	850.00		27.00	54.00	81.00			81.00	9.5%
TOTAL Village Maintenance	9,061.42	15,244.00	50.43	1,935.45	5,788.73	7,774.61	571.21	571.21	8,345.82	54.7%
Castle St Toilets + Car Park										
4701 Castle St Toilets Cleaning	451.93	400.00			80.30	80.30	56.90	56.90	137.20	34.3%
4702 Castle St Toilets Electricity	681.00	560.00	58.00	56.35	63.14	177.49	63.34	63.34	240.83	43.0%
4703 Castle Street Rates	922.15	977.00	1,135.23			1,135.23			1,135.23	116.2%
4704 Castle St Toilets Repairs	558.46	350.00		80.00		80.00			80.00	22.9%
4705 Castle St Toilets Water	504.82	700.00		312.51		312.51			312.51	44.6%
4706 Castle St Car Park maint	700.55	750.00			70.07	70.07	54.00	54.00	124.07	16.5%
4707 Castle St Toilets major works	1,910.42									**
TOTAL Castle St Toilets + Car Park	5,729.33	3,737.00	1,193.23	448.86	213.51	1,855.60	174.24	174.24	2,029.84	54.3%
Grants										
4801 Grants Pool	6,497.18	5,300.00		80.00	450.00	530.00			530.00	10.0%
4811 Payments - Other Orgs	1,135.03	2,208.00		154.00	192.50	346.50	176.00	176.00	522.50	23.7%
TOTAL Grants	7,632.21	7,508.00		234.00	642.50	876.50	176.00	176.00	1,052.50	14.0%
Total Budget Expenditure	72,611.22	83,830.00	5,965.07	8,732.62	11,458.27	26,155.96	2,087.23	2,087.23	28,243.19	33.7%
Total Budget Income	80,331.64	83,313.00	77,063.00	386.87	1,642.88	79,092.75	2,084.00	2,084.00	81,176.75	97.4%
Non Budget										
515 VAT Paid	4,092.69		494.70	670.53	1,382.60	2,547.83	227.30	227.30	2,775.13	
4901 Community Inf Levy	2,500.00		1,955.00	368.09		2,323.09			2,323.09	
TOTAL ALL Expenditure	85,796.60	83,830.00	10,864.47	10,809.86	14,223.47	31,026.88	2,541.83	2,541.83	33,341.41	
TOTAL ALL Income	92,343.61	83,313.00	77,063.00	1,063.27	1,642.88	79,769.15	4,628.11	4,628.11	84,397.26	
Balance expenditure-income			- 66,198.53	9,746.59	12,580.59	- 48,742.27	- 2,086.28	- 2,086.28	- 51,055.85	

Budget Report 2025/2026
as at 10 July 2025

Balances

Bank	UT Current acc	9,929.25		Balance:	as at 1 Apr	92,512.97	
	UT Deposit acc	133,491.56			Plus: income	84,397.26	
	Santander a/c3	148.01	143,568.82		Less: payments	33,341.41	143,568.82

Reserves as at 10 July

Account		Balance at 1 Apr 2025	Debit	Credit	Current Balance
321	Elections Reserve	1,082.00			1,082.00
322	Payroll Reserve	8,804.99			8,804.99
325	CANS Reserve	3,560.98			3,560.98
328	Lucy Hobbs Trust (capital fund)	2,335.65			2,335.65
329	Community Infrastructure Levy	18,952.43	2,323.09	840.00	17,469.34
330	Service Devolution Reserve	22,585.50	4,620.00	2,000.00	19,965.50
336	War Memorial Maintenance	2,000.00			2,000.00
337	Village Maintenance	13,571.79	2,245.93		11,325.86
338	Lime St/Mill Lane	746.66			746.66
		73,640.00	9,189.02	2,840.00	67,290.98
	Current Year Fund (balance of expenditure/income)				54,515.79
310	General Reserve**	18,872.97	nett: +£6,349.02		25,221.99
			= Bank Balance at 10 July		£ 143,568.82