

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th August 2025 at 7.30pm, in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.

Present: Cllr's C Silverlight (Chair), Ms S Drury, A Paul and S Bellamy.

In attendance: Somerset Council Cllr's S Wakefield & Cllr R Henley, one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

54/08/25. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. No disclosures.

55/08/25. Democratic Period. The member of the public did not wish to speak.

56/08/25. Report from Somerset Councillors – to include request for street lighting at Ham. Cllr Wakefield reported there had been a lot of noise about community hospital bed cuts. Adult Social Care are trying to get people out of hospital and back to their homes but if they are discharged too quickly they will need more care at home which will cost more. Somerset Council will be asking the Government for more money. The planning department are making progress on clearing their backlog. Cllr Wakefield has gone back to Matt Barrow and Amanda Williams, Community Stakeholder Engagement Officers for Connecting Devon and Somerset, and asked for more information about Openreach's plans for Project Gigabit in Somerset.

Cllr Wakefield has made enquiries about street lighting being installed along the road from the A38 to Ham but was asked whether this could be jointly financed by the Parish Council. This will be added to the agenda for the next meeting so that it can be discussed.

Cllr Henley reported the Boundary Commission Review Consultation had closed and the next stage will be starting. While the integrity of parish boundaries remains the same there are eleven parishes that will be split between two electoral wards. There is nothing more that parishes can do about this. The community links between West Buckland and Wellington were noted and it would be better for West Buckland to work with Wellington rather than a suggestion to link with Bishops Hull.

The new bus service has taken time to take off but it is now running and being used. This is something that Cllr Henley and Cllr Wakefield campaigned for.

Cllr Henley and Cllr Wakefield left the meeting at 8pm.

57/08/25. J26 to Chelston road project – update from Syed Shah, Somerset Council Public Liaison Officer. Mr Shah was unable to attend. He had contacted the Clerk to inform the Parish Council that a project meeting is to be held tomorrow, 27th August, and the date that Junction 26 and the Chelston Link Road will be reopened will be agreed. This is likely to be ahead of schedule. The final newsletter will follow.

58/08/25. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29/07/25 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Clerk.

59/08/25. Matters arising from the minutes. No matters arising.

60/08/25. To continue to discuss broadband issues in the parish. Covered under item 56/08/25.

61/08/25. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting.

46/25/0020 Erection of food store (Use Class E) with associated works including parking, access and landscaping on land to the south of the A38 and east of West Buckland Road, Wellington. Comment. West Buckland Parish Council has no objections in principle but would like to ensure that consideration is given to plans for lighting on this site to ensure that the dark skies status of the Blackdown Hills is maintained and steps are taken to ensure it is not compromised.

The Clerk will find out if Aldi will be providing funding for the community if their application is successful and would provide funding towards new play equipment.

b) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by Somerset Council.

46/25/0016 Erection of covered farmyard manure store at Lower Ruggin Farm, Ruggin Road, West Buckland. Decision: conditional approval.

46/25/0019/CJ Notification for Prior Approval for the installation of solar voltaic equipment to the roof of VPK Wellington, Ham Road, Chelston Business Park, Wellington. Decision: no objection.

c) Any other planning matters. No other planning matters.

62/08/25. Highways.

a) To note any required work to be reported to SC. Cllr Drury reported that a joint on the bridge over the M5 had widened and was advised that it wasn't a fault. Other people also reported the same thing and were told it was a fault and would be repaired in twenty-eight working days.

b) To receive an update on outstanding highways work (Kerb at Dyers Close and drainage in Silver Street. The Clerk was asked to nag Gwyn Hughes, SCC Assistant Highways Service Manager, for an update.

c) Chapter 8 training in order to take the SID project further. The Clerk will send details of a training opportunity to Cllr Paul.

d) Update on repairs to the arm of the fingerpost at Blackmoor. Cllr Paul has spoken to a member of the Taunton Model Engineers and they are willing to try and repair the arm. Cllr Silverlight has asked R W Gale Ltd to provide a quote to remove the part of the damaged arm that is still on the fingerpost.

e) Any other highways matters. None.

63/08/25. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments: Countrywide - £143.77 grass cutting contract for playing field (Payment ref: 2526/31).

Mrs J Larcombe – £371.20 Clerk's salary and expenses (Payment ref 2526/32)

H M Revenue & Customs - £50.20 PAYE for August (Payment ref: 2526/33)

The following payment has been made since the last meeting: Hydra EVC Ltd – £90.00 annual charge (Payment ref: 2526/30). An invoice was not received when the charge for renewal was due and it was discovered the charger had stopped

operating. As this had potentially resulted in lost income it was felt the Parish Council should ask for compensation.

Since the last meeting a bank service charge of £6.00 was paid from the account on 31st July. Another payment of £6.00 will be taken on 31st August.

Transfers were made from the Current Account to the Instant Access account to bring the balance back to £1,000.00. An internal transfer will be made to bring the Current Account balance to £1,000

b) To note any receipts since the last meeting and the bank accounts

balances. Since the last meeting a VAT refund of £2,165.38 has been received.

The current account balance is £1,000.00 and the Instant Access Account balance is £24,968.34.

c) Bank reconciliation 31.07.25. This was checked against the bank statement and signed by Cllr Paul.

64/08/25. Playing Field:

a) Any points to note from the regular inspection. The monthly inspection report has been emailed to the Clerk by Cllr Bellamy. Cllr Silverlight will repair the goalpost arms. Cllr Bellamy will carry out the repair to the roundabout. The Clerk will book the annual inspection of the play area.

b) Update on Wellington Football Club investigating the use of the playing field for a youth team. No update.

c) Update on the installation of a key safe for the key for the playing field gate. The Village Hall Committee has given permission for the Parish Council to fix a key safe to the wall by the entrance to the Village Hall. A key safe has been purchased and Cllr Silverlight will fix it to the wall and mark it PC. The Clerk will contact the contractors who cut the grass to make them aware of where the key is and to give them the code.

d) Any other playing field matters. Anyone fixing signs to the playing field fence will be asked to use staples rather than drawing pins.

65/08/25. Footpaths: any footpath matters. About four people have reported the issue with the stile on Footpath WG14/30 at the junction with WG14/27/27a.

66/08/25. Update on setting up a regular monthly meeting for older members of the parish. Cllr Mrs Moore will give a full report at the next meeting. It was noted that Village Hall bookings are changing to an online system.

67/08/25. To receive apologies for absence. Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Moore.

68/08/25. Progress with recruiting more councillors. Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Ms Drury will be meeting with a potential councillor to discuss what is involved.

69/08/25. Correspondence. There was no further correspondence.

70/08/25. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions). A member of the public had contacted Cllr Silverlight to express their concern about a Union Flag that had been attached to the bridge over the M5. The flag attached to the railings was reported online to National Highways as a potential hazard. They responded by email that they would investigate this. Within 24 hours the flag had been removed but it is unknown by whom.

71/08/25. To note the date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 30th September 2025. Cllr Ms Drury gave her apologies.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date: