

Clatworthy Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2025 in Clatworthy Village Hall

Present: John Ward (Acting Chair), Kevin Chesterman, Jonathan Douglas, Sophie Macfarlane, Linda Sharp, Frances Nicholson (Somerset Councillor), Norma Martin (Clerk), and Gemma Forster (potential councillor).

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Margaret Deer, Sally Moran, Steven Pugsley (Somerset Councillor).

2. Minutes of meeting held on 5 August 2025

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 August 2025 were confirmed correct and signed by the Acting Chair.

3. Matters arising not covered on the agenda

Defibrillator training: a very useful and well attended session was held on 16 October, led by Wivey First Responder, Roger Wilson.

Action: COMPLETE

On-line authorisation of BACS payments: The Clerk confirmed that the current documentation is still accurate.

Action: COMPLETE

'PC roles' documentation and annual schedule issued.

Action: COMPLETE

Councillor co-option: Sally's efforts have proved successful.

Action: COMPLETE

4. Update from Somerset Council (Somerset Cllr Frances)

No decision has yet been announced by the Boundary Commission on the electoral boundaries for the new Somerset Council area, but one is expected very soon.

There is a new review underway of Parish boundaries in Somerset, which is expected to focus on parishes where substantial housing developments have resulted in the responsibility for service provision across neighbouring parishes no longer being in line with income sources. It seems unlikely that Clatworthy will be affected.

What may affect the village is that Somerset Council is working with the social housing providers to take more account of the impact of location, so that families used to an urban environment and with no experience of living in remoter communities without transport or local facilities (work opportunities, schools, doctors, shops, etc.) are not placed in small, remote villages, just because there is a property of the right size. It is hoped that this would avoid some of the problems encountered both by the families themselves and by the villages concerned and would also increase the availability of housing for local families in need of accommodation.

5. Highways

Cllr Linda had followed up her concerns about the Highways on-line reporting without any improvement. She feels that their problem reporting software was misleading and unhelpful and that Highways were not doing anything about the problems she raised. Somerset Cllr Frances assured us that, although the software implied otherwise, the problems were probably being tackled. This seems a very unsatisfactory situation.

It was also noted that Somerset Cllr Steven had indicated that he was liaising with other councils in the area to see if a joint approach could be organised to address some of the issues directly.

Regarding the landslip at Waterrow, BT have stated that re-routing their services to allow Highways to carry out a permanent repair will require several months of planning and is unlikely to be achievable until the new financial year. In the interim Highways are making temporary repairs that should enable them to re-open the road in a limited but safe form.

6. Village Emergency Plan

Chair Sally had asked that, in her absence, Council agree a date to revisit and update the village's emergency plan.

Councillors agreed a provisional date of Monday 24th November for the meeting. Chair Sally will confirm, organise and lead the meeting.

Action: Sally

7. Finance

VAT paid in the previous financial year has now been reclaimed and the savings account (held on behalf of the Village Hall trustees) is now closed.

7.1 Current position

		£	
Balance at Lloyds Williton 29/7/25		4463.62	
Receipts	Ref	£	Details
HMRC VAT rebate		63.33	
Balance from closed savings a/c		0.03	
Total Receipts		63.36	
Payments			
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription – Aug 25
Bank Charges		4.25	
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription – Sep 25
Bank Charges		4.25	
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription – Oct 25
Bank Charges		4.25	
Total Payments		48.72	
Balance at Lloyds Williton 29/10/25		4478.26	

Spend against 25-26 budget

	Plan	Actual	Comments
Audit fees	30.00	30.00	
Insurance – Parish Council	150.00	127.59	
Clatworthy VH – Insurance	450.00	390.08	Payment imminent
SALC membership	30.00	40.71	
Clerk/Councillor training	100.00		There are new councillors who might benefit
Postage & stationery	30.00		
Defibrillator	250.00		Intended for maintenance reserve
Phone box	50.00	102.84	
Parish Web site	160.00	83.93	
WAP – Wivey Link	0.00		Normally considered at February meeting
S137 (Local charities)	300.00		Normally considered at February meeting
Contingency/Misc	200.00	31.75	Bank charges started April 25
Total	1750.00	806.90	Plan total includes additions to reserves

7.2 Payments for authorisation

The invoice for the Village Hall Insurance is well below the planned amount and does not require additional authorisation.

7.3 Budget for 2026/27

Councillors reviewed the budget proposal and agreed a precept of £1050; unchanged from the current year.

7.4 Confirmation of on-going Direct Debits

Council authorised the continuation of the monthly Direct Debit of £11.99 to Hugo Fox for the PC web-site.

8. Risk Register: annual review

Council reviewed the PC Risk Register in accordance with the process described in Clatworthy Parish Risk Management.

There are currently no improvement actions identified and no changes were required to the likelihood/impact levels. It was noted that the entry regarding the savings account can be removed now that it is closed.

Some minor changes are needed to the text to bring references to documents and their locations up to date. The clerk will amend as necessary and re-issue the register. **Action: Clerk**

9. Parish Council meeting day

The e-mail poll of councillors produced an almost unanimous choice of Monday rather than Friday for PC meetings, now that almost a third of councillors work away from home Tuesday to Thursday. The only dissenter magnanimously agreed to go along with the majority. It was proposed to opt for the second Monday in the month rather than the first, to reduce the risk of it being a bank holiday.

Once this is ratified by Chair Sally, new meeting dates will be e-mailed to all relevant parties. **Action: Clerk**

10. Other matters for information

Planning application 3/06/25/002, Old Holcombe Water Farm, was received the day before the meeting. It is for the replacement of an old garage, with a collapsed wall, with a new garage of the same size and in the same place. Councillors did not feel the need to hold a further PC meeting to consider the application.

Meeting dates for 2025/26

Following the meeting it was confirmed that future PC meetings would be held on the second Monday of the relevant month. Scheduled meeting dates for 2026 are therefore:

9 February 2026, 11 May 2026, 10 August 2026, 9 November 2026

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.47 p.m.

In order to reduce ink usage and paper wastage, please note that from the AGM in May 2025, the Clerk will not provide paper copies at meetings of documents previously e-mailed to Parish Councillors, except by prior agreement with individuals. (Printed minutes and agenda will be available by default for Somerset Councillors.)