



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2026
AT SAMPFORD COURTENAY VILLAGE HALL**

Present : Cllr M Wilson (Chair) Cllr M Carpenter , Cllr P Collins , Cllr A Green , Cllr J McIlwraith , Cllr J Moesel , Cllr V Smedley , Cllr T Squire , Cllr S Davies (DCC) Malcolm Harris- Clerk and 10 members of the Public

1 Chairs Welcome

Cllr Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting. The village had recently hosted a successful Flower and Vegetable show and contributed over £300 towards the Village Green enhancement fund. The Chair thanked all concerned for their voluntary help and support towards the project.

2 Apologies: None

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 Register of Interests – Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests

3.2 To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature. **None**

3.3 To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature **None**

4 Approval of Minutes – It was resolved to sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2026 and previously circulated as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

Proposed Cllr Wilson

Seconded Cllr Carpenter

All in favour

5 Public Participation – There were 10 members of the public present Two items for discussion had previously been submitted to the Chair. **The Village Green and Dogs.** With regard to dogs on the village green , the Parish Council had been asked if they were considering allowing dogs onto the Green. The response, was that there has been no discussion regarding this matter and there are no plans to change the current policy allowing dogs onto the Green.

Parking in the Village Square - the Parish Council had received e- mails from parishioners regarding concerns about parking in the square. The main issue related to the number of cars consistently parked in front of the Church House and Historic Church rooms and reports of intimidating behaviour to residents and visitors who have parked nearby.

Following a discussion led by the Chair,

It was recommended that the Parish Council action, on behalf of the residents concerned, to

5.1 consult with the Legal depts at WDBC as to the legality of running a business from the dwelling concerned, and,;

5.2) write to the resident concerned and request that the vehicles concerned be removed or located to a more suitable location , and

5.3) research with Devon Highways on the legality and appropriateness of parking restrictions in and around the Square to prevent obstruction, and

*5.4) make enquiries with Historic England as to the legal position of preserving the heritage of the site, **Actions Chair***

Proposed Cllr Wilson

Seconded Cllr McIlwraith

All in favour

6 Planning

6.1 Planning Decisions- 1669/26/TCHTI maintenance on tree at St Andrews Church - **Noted** that WDBC had no objections

6.2 Planning Applications-2333/26/FUL **Willey Farm** – Erection of Open sided Barn – **Supported**

6.3 Enforcement Notice – Serenity Apiary Barn – Noted that WDBC found NO Breach of Planning Regulations WDBC

6.4 Planning Appeals – 3758/26/FUL Land at Rectory Hill. To note that this appeal follows the refusal of planning permission for an equestrian centre. Previously supported by the Parish Council.

6.5 Local Plan Consultation- the Clerk confirmed that this is the initial stage of the Local Plan consultation process. Cllr Wilson and Cllr McIlwraith will be part of an online briefing and the presentation will be forwarded to Councillors.

7 Parish Priorities

7.1 Village Green Development Project – the Parish Clerk introduced the report and outlined the proposals that highlighted three areas of development in the Village Green. Replacement of the play equipment , the development introduction of an adult exercise area and additional facilities to enhance the community space. The full report and photographs are available on the website. There was a full discussion and the following recommendations were agreed.

7.1a) It was recommended that the current Multi Activity Station for children be removed, and

7.1b) that the available budget of £9502 be allocated to phase 1 of the Village Green project to include a new Toddlers Play Tower and 3 adult outdoor exercise gym stations, and

7.1c) that applications for additional funding be made to WDBC and DCC ,and

7.1d) that the element of community use be undertaken after the VAT has been reclaimed and additional funding is made available at the start of the 2027/28 financial year, and

7.1e) that a further report be brought to the November meeting to set out the details of three formal quotations for the Village Green Development Project with a view to commencing work in the Spring of 2027. (Action, the Clerk)

Proposed Cllr Wilson

Seconded Cllr Green

All in favour

7.2 Road safety –The DCC Road Warden scheme and Speed Awareness Scheme

The Clerk confirmed that a volunteer for the Road Warden scheme who had previously come forward at the Open Meeting had indicated that they were no longer available to commit to the role. The meeting concluded that the Parish Council should actively publicise the schemes and seek volunteers. **Action Clerk**

The Speed Awareness Scheme to be taken forward in the near future . **Action Chair**

7.3 Sampford Courtenay Station / Okehampton Interchange

Cllr McIlwraith spoke to this item. The Okehampton Interchange is running successfully and the dual track work at Cowley Bridge is now operational , ensuring that the Okehampton to Exeter line runs efficiently. He was requested to continue to represent the needs of parishioners and look to review the Terms of Reference for the Dartmoor Line sub-committee to support the campaign to reopen the station. **Action Cllr McIlwraith**

8 Councillor and Clerk Items and Reports

Cllr Sue Davies from Devon County Council presented her report to the meeting. A copy of which is available on the website www.sampfordcourtenay-pc.gov.uk . One of the key areas of the report centred around the Central Government decision to pause the Local Government Review and there is a website www.futuredevon.org.uk that has been set up for all the latest information. Other topics discussed were Highways Issues ,Carers in Devon and the Crisis and Resilience Fund. Cllr Davies also suggested that the Parish Council seek funding from DCC for the Adult Fitness project in the Village Green at an appropriate time in the project timeframe. **Action Clerk**

8.1 Annual Play Inspection Report

The Clerk reported that the Annual Inspection had highlighted defects within the multi-use play equipment and that the roped climbing area had been put out of action and awaiting a small replacement part to ensure the safety of users - this until such time as the equipment can be totally replaced in the Spring of 2027 . All other areas of inspection were identified as low risk and no remedial action is planned.

8.2 Review of Policies

The Clerk presented the report which listed all the Parish Council policies and their next Review dates. Three policies are due to be reviewed this year and will be brought back to the November meeting. The Disciplinary Policy, The Grievance Policy and Grants and Donations Policy . The internal auditor for the Parish Council had recommended in this year's audit (2026/27) that the Council create 2 new policies – A Data Breach Policy and a Subject Access Request Procedure and these will be created and brought to the January meeting for approval and adoption. **Action Clerk**

8.3 Local Government Review - Cllr Wilson told the meeting that she will be attending a briefing meeting on Local Government Reorganisation online in the near future with WDBC . She will update Councillors following this briefing and provide information for the website. **Action Chair**

8.4 National Emergency Briefing - Deferred to the next meeting .

8.5 Fibre broadband in Sampford Chapple Hamlets -Cllr Wilson updated the meeting on the issues surrounding lack of connectivity and the impact on local residents . The Chair will continue to liaise with the company . **Action Chair**

- 8.6 Autumn Parish Clean Up** – Cllr Wilson told the meeting that the date had been announced as 17th October and that publicity requesting volunteer help on the day would be required . The Clerk to notify the Roundabout Editor.
- 9 Finance**
- 9.1 Monthly Accounts** –the report had previously been circulated to Councillors and was duly noted.
- 9.2 Payments and Transfers** - the approval and ratification of the published record (attached as Appendix A)
It was proposed that the September 2026/ 2027 Payments and Transfers be approved and ratified as a correct record.
Proposed Cllr Wilson Secoded Cllr Carpenter All in favour
- 9.3 Half – yearly budget report.** The report had previously been circulated .The Clerk reported on the current position. It was noted that 54% of the allocated budget has been spent. The only overspend is on website development and Microsoft 365 at £779 and may be able to be absorbed or covered by contingencies in the EMR fund.
- 9.4 Public Sector Pay Increase** – the Clerk informed the meeting that a pay rise of 3.3% had been agreed and backdated to 01 April 2026. The backpay for the Clerk had been calculated at £93.60 and will be paid as part of the September salary. A 5% provision was made in the Clerks salary costs for 2026/27.
- 9.5 Project hours – A provision of 20 hours additional hours pay for the Clerk was included in the salary budget for projects in 2026/27** The Clerk claimed 5 of the hours for work undertaken on the Village Green project to be paid as part of the September salary.
It was proposed that the additional 5 hours be paid to the Clerk.
Proposed: Cllr Wilson Secoded Cllr J. Moesel All in favour
- 10 Village Hall Update** – Cllr Green gave an update as the Village Hall representative.
 Whilst income to date has been slightly less than over a similar period last year, the usage of the Hall has been up with 211 events over 183 hiring days. Two events in particular were very successful - the Flower and Vegetable Show and the Quiz and Puddings event. The main fundraising challenge is to replace the Main Hall floor and this continues to be the most important focus. However, there is a need to purchase a Sound Bar in the next few months to ensure that the profitable Film nights can continue.
 The Councils Grant Policy invites one local application each year and the Village Hall committee could submit an application. Details are set out in the Grants Policy for all parishioners to read at www.sampfordcourtenay-pc.gov.uk
 Cllr Green will be emailed a Policy – **Action Clerk**
- 11 Date of the next meeting** – 18 November 2026
 Items for Agenda – National Emergency Briefing – Chair
 Play and Exercise equipment Quotes - Clerk
 There being no further public business, the meeting closed at **8.40pm,**

Appendix A: Payments, Transfers, and Receipts – 14th September, 2026

Payments			
Details	Amount	Notes	Status
P. Mallett	£141.31	Toilet Cleaner- wages/expenses	Paid
Unity Bank	£7.00	Bank service charge - June	Paid
Yu-Energy	£12.92	Toilets – electricity - June	Paid
GX Accountants	£84.00	Payroll Admin charge – 1 st quarter.	Paid
Gold Coast Media	£264.00	Web site development	Paid
South West Water	£73.50	Toilets - water	Paid
Unity Bank	£7.00	Bank service charge - July	Paid
M.Harris	£227.64	Clerks salary -July	Paid
Play Inspection Comp	£144.00	Annual Play Inspection	Paid
P. Mallett	£163.23	Toilet Cleaner – wages - July	Paid
P. Mallett	£2.00	Toilet Cleaner – wages adjustment.	Paid
Yu-Energy	£13.35	Toilets – electricity - July	Paid
SC Village Hall	£27.00	Village Hall – Rental – April -Sept.	For approval
M.Harris	£227.64	Clerks salary - Aug	Paid
M.Harris	£147.08	Travel expenses – April to Sept. 2 nd £46.20. 2 nd Quarter home allowance. £90.00 Stationary/stamps - £10.88	For approval
M.Harris	£93.60	Clerks backpay April – Sept. To be paid in September salary.	For approval
P. Mallett	£139.81	Toilet Cleaner – wages - Aug	Paid
P. Mallett	£5.75	Toilets - materials	Paid
Unity Trust Bank	£7.00	Bank service charge - August	Paid

Yu-Energy	£13.35	Toilets – electricity - Sept	Paid
T Davey	£250.00	Maintenance – Village Green	Approved
Total Payments	£1801.18		
Income			
Unity Trust Bank	£101.36	Bank interest	Paid
HMRC	£1802.55	VAT Refund	Paid
SeaMoor Lotto	£21.00	Lotto win - July	Paid
SeaMoor Lotto	£14.00	Lotto win - August	Paid
WDBC	£6,629.00	Precept 2 nd payment	Paid
Total Income	£8567.91		
Transfers between accounts			
Transfers from EMR to Current 1			
Total transfers to Current 1	None		
Transfers from Current to EMR			
HMRC	£1465.39	VAT Refund – Water path-benches.	Transferred
Precept 2026/27	£25.00	Church Clock Fund	For approval
Top up for EMR	£200.00	Toilet Maintenance	
	£1000.00	Village Green Project	
	£500.00	Website Admin Contingency	
	£1000.00	Unallocated Cash Flow	
Total transfers to Reserve Account.	£4190.39		
Account Balance before the pending transactions @ 10/09/26			
Current account	£8,741.93		
Reserve account balance	£23,295.32		

Items in red submitted for approval at the meeting