

MINUTES of the MEETING of NETTLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
Held on TUESDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2025 – 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Cllrs Robin Wichard (Chair), Oliver Reynolds, Wendy Perry, Becky Marsh, Shelagh Laver, and Clerk – Sophie Wichard.

The meeting opened with a minute's silence for Remembrance Day.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Cllr Reynolds asked for his interest as a neighbour of the barn at Beggearn Huish to be registered in the context of a planning application to be discussed later.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs Justin Nichols, Iain Mackie and Liz Scott.

No Somerset Councillors attended the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: these were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and signed after agreed amendments to the wording of the Planning Minute in respect of the field at Nutwall, and the Flood Group Minute.

3. OPEN FORUM – FOR ALL RESIDENTS:

There were no members of the public present.

4. SOMERSET COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:

There were no Councillors from the County in attendance at the meeting and no reports submitted.

5. CORRESPONDENCE:

5.1 CRIME REPORT FROM AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE detailing local crime figures and patterns. Cllrs were asked to remind local residents to remain vigilant as rural crime – especially from barn and other outbuildings – remained a major issue.

5.2 INVOICE FROM SALC for councillor training. To be raised under Finance Report.

6. MATTERS OF REPORT: there were no issues to discuss as all matters of interest would arise in Reports.

7. CURRENT REPORTS:

Chairman's Report:

There is a continuation in the delegation of responsibilities from County to Parish level which continues to put pressure on parishes like Nettlecombe. With a very small number of, predominantly elderly, parishioners, there is a limit to which we can realistically raise the parish precept. This is particularly relevant in the context of our ongoing commitments to works at the Parish Church (discussed in depth in the last minutes). In addition, the Local Communities Network focuses on issues relevant to the larger, more populated and urban parishes meaning that there are few opportunities to discuss the issues affecting this parish – especially highways and the lack of viable broadband internet. Where discussions on infrastructure do occur, they are dominated by the closure of the Blue Anchor to Watchet road, and the potential for the West Somerset Railway to become a part of the local commuter network. These issues only impact on us when there is an incident (as happened only a few

days before the meeting) when the main A39 was blocked for most of the day by an accident and fuel spill, causing complete gridlock throughout the neighbouring parishes.

Local Community Network (LCN) Update:

In large part this has been addressed within the Chairman's Report. The promotion of active travel within the National Park will impact on our many footpaths. The work of the Coastal Protection Working Group continues with a focus on Doniford and also the impact of coastal erosion on the road between Blue Anchor and Watchet. The Parish has completed the Community Resilience survey.

ENPA:

There were no issues directly affecting the parish.

Highways:

There have been no particular issues to report however there remains a concern about potholes (including those reported in the minutes of the previous meeting) not being addressed. Councillors were reminded that there is a link on the Parish website for reporting potholes – please log and report any that you are concerned about. You will receive a case number which can then be tracked.

Footpaths:

No concerns had been raised. A few fallen branches had been cleared but otherwise all appears good.

West Somerset Flood Group:

Cllr Nichols had sent in a report on the last meeting he had attended. The key issues were that far greater responsibility for the maintenance of river/stream banks will now pass from the Environment Agency/Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to riparian owners. Sadly the lead officials and local MP did not attend the meeting (although scheduled to do so) and the two representatives for the Environment Agency could give no precise guidance on how this will be managed or how responsibility will be established. This is perceived to be an issue which has not been fully planned or resourced and is likely to lead to a great deal of confusion.

Other Parish Matters:

Cllr Perry suggested that a summary of each meeting should be submitted for inclusion in the Parish Magazine to make more parishioners aware of the work of the Parish Council. This was agreed and the Clerk will forward a summary of each meeting.

Clerk - finance:

There was only one transaction since the last meeting – an invoice from SALC for £30 in respect of councillor training. This payment was approved.

8. FUTURE BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION:

There were no additional matters to raise at this meeting.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is on Tuesday 10th February 2026 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm

Chair..... Date.....