

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Held on	Tuesday 29 July 2025 at 7.00pm. in room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.
Members (summoned and present)	Cllrs Bryan Knickerbocker (Chair), Anna Thomson (Vice Chair), Heidi Dalgarno, Peter Goater, Jean Howard, Terry Napper, Heather Shearer, Nicola Smith, and Adrian Sparkes and Nina Swift.
Members (Summoned but provided apologies or were absent)	Cllrs Pam Birch, Simon Carswell, Alison Horgan, and Bruno Reina.
Officers Present:	Jenny Service (Clerk).
In attendance:	Residents (0).

Public Question Time

Parishioners are invited to direct questions or comments to the Chair who will invite each person to speak for up to three minutes on any subject/s of concern.

No matters were raised.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The Chair opened the meeting.

25/26.FC.073. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received by Cllrs Birch, Carswell, Horgan, and Reina and noted.
LGA 1972 s85(1).

25/26.FC.074. Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

Declarations of Interest including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) were invited on agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

No requests from members for Dispensations were made. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda were made by the following members:

- Councillor Smith – Resident Mellanby Close.
- Councillor Carswell – Chair of Merriman Park Community Group.
- Councillor Shearer – NHS Trust Governor
- Councillor Napper – Lives near Contractor 2 (Grounds Maintenance Tender for Play Areas and Open Spaces)

25/26.FC.075. Proposed Bed Closures at West Mendip Hospital – Concerns Over Transparency and Impact on Local Healthcare Provision

Background: West Mendip Hospital's Original Purpose

West Mendip Community Hospital was opened on 18 April 2005 as a purpose-built NHS facility on Old Wells Road in Glastonbury. It was designed to consolidate services from Butleigh Hospital and Wells & District Hospital, creating a modern community healthcare centre to serve central Somerset. The hospital was established to:

- Provide 36 inpatient beds.*
- Offer outpatient rehabilitation and recovery services.*
- Operate a Minor Injuries Unit.*
- Act as a hub for community-based care across the region.*

A proposed closure or repurposing of 20 beds at West Mendip Hospital in Glastonbury marks a significant departure from the hospital's founding vision, raising serious concerns about reduced access to care—especially for elderly and vulnerable patients in the area. The changes form part of wider plans by Somerset NHS Foundation Trust affecting community hospitals across the county.

Members of Street Parish Council discussed concerns that despite the scale and significance of the proposed changes, no public consultation appears to have taken place, and a business case has not been published.

At the meeting, Street Parish Council:

- Noted the concerns raised by Cllr Claire Sully, Vice Chair of Somerset Council's Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee.
- Discussed the potential impact on residents particularly those without access to transport who may be required to travel further for care.
- Supported calls for Somerset Council to hold an emergency scrutiny meeting to examine the decision in full.

RESOLVED – to write to Somerset NHS Foundation Trust expressing the Parish Council's concerns and calling for a pause on implementation pending proper scrutiny and public engagement. The letter will include the following points:

- 1. A call for an immediate pause on implementation of the proposed changes to allow for proper scrutiny.*
- 2. A request for publication of the full business case underpinning the decision, so it can be reviewed by local communities and elected representatives.*
- 3. A requirement for meaningful engagement with the public and local councils, particularly given the significant implications for residents who may struggle to access more distant healthcare services.*
- 4. An expression of strong concerns about the decision-making process.*

RESOLVED – that Street Parish Council issue a press release.

25/26.FC.076. CONFIDENTIAL SESSIONS

RESOLVED - In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, a resolution was passed at the meeting to exclude the press and public as the final item on the agenda involves confidential information on legal/contractual matters.

25/26.FC.077. Grounds Maintenance Tender for Play Areas and Open Spaces

Members received and considered three tenders for the new Grounds Maintenance Contract.

Note: Councillor Goater, the Clerk and one other Officer reviewed tenders on Monday 21 July 2025. The Parish Council received a briefing paper, scoring matrix and price comparison prepared by the Clerk. Members discussed a Street Parish Council Press release – this was deferred.

RESOLVED – to award Contractor 2 (SLH Services Ltd) the 2025-27 Grounds Maintenance Contract for Play Areas and Open Spaces due to be devolved to Street Parish Council from Somerset Council.

Total contract tender value for SLH Services submitted as £26,577.88 per year for two-year fixed term contract. As Tannery Fields was removed by Street Parish Council under minute reference 25/26.FC.078 total value of contract awarded to SLH Services - £25,630.05 per year for a two-year fixed term contract.

RESOLVED - that Councillor Dalgarno work in conjunction with the Clerk to refine any details in relation to biodiversity with the appointed contractor.

RESOLVED - That the Parish Council delegate contractual arrangements to the Contracts Working Group (Cllrs Goater, Knickerbocker, and Sparkes) and the Clerk including preparation of the contract for signing.

RESOLVED – that the contract include a clause stating that Street Parish Council reserves the right to terminate the relevant section of the agreement pertaining to each key area if the associated asset transfer from Somerset Council does not proceed.

RESOLVED – to approve a budget of up to £1,000 for legal advice (devolution budget).

25/26.FC.078. Devolution of Play Areas and Open Spaces from Somerset Council

a. Members received the red line maps of devolved Play Areas and Open Spaces.

Note: these may be subject to change once Asset Management at Somerset Council have reviewed the land registry titles.

*Note: Previous Council Resolution 24/25.FC.181 Council strategy December 2024 (Option C) To pursue devolution of five Play Areas and Key Strategic Open Spaces but NOT Woods Batch at this stage. * Somerset Council have since advised that if Street Parish Council wish to proceed with Mellanby Close grass area they will need to take Mellanby Close Play Area.*

b. Members were asked to resolve any final changes to the agreed strategy for the Devolution of Play Areas and Open Spaces from Somerset Council to Street Parish Council.

This included consideration of:

i. Mellanby Close Play Area and Grass Area

Devolving Mellanby Close Play Area together with Mellanby Close grass area or removing Mellanby Close grass area from scope.

ii. Woods Batch Complexities – Lease arrangement

Street Parish Council have been advised that the Woods Batch area, including the play area, is the subject of a single lease to Somerset Council, which could add an extra layer of complexities for both Street Parish Council and Somerset Council. As the Parish Council have previously resolved to pursue splitting the site it is recommended that the Parish Council pursue a maintenance agreement with Somerset Council with reference to the lease and review the long-term position for the whole of Woods Batch at a future date.

iii. Tannery Field

Street Parish Council are seeking confirmation that Somerset Council have a lease agreement with Street Football Club. The Clerk advised that Street Parish Council could request Somerset Council explore the possibility of transfer of the land registry titles and transfer whole lease agreement or remove Tannery Fields from scope.

RESOLVED – to pursue devolving Mellanby Close Play Area together with Mellanby Close grass area.

RESOLVED – to agree a maintenance agreement with Somerset Council to enable Street Parish Council to maintain the play area only and revisit the option to devolve the whole of Woods Batch (including open spaces) at a later stage alongside investigating the lease / covenant position.

RESOLVED – to remove Tannery Field from the scope of devolution.

Summary of areas to progress with Somerset Council for devolution:

- Goss Drive Play Area and Grass Area (Kickabout)
- Willow Road Grass Area (adj 22 Willow Rd) and Willow Road Grass Area (to rear of 62-68 Goss Drive)
- Ringolds Way Play Area and Ringolds Way Grass Area (adj Ringolds Way Play Area) and Ringolds Way Grass Area (adj 2 Pearmain Road)
*Note: *Clerk to check red line map with Somerset Council*
- Bove Moor Play Area and Bove Moor Road Grass Area & Recreation
- Gould Close Grass Area West of 9 Gould Close
- Gould Close 173 Strode Road Grass Area behind and 179 Strode Road Grass Area behind Gould Close
- Mellanby Close Play Area Play and Mellanby Grass Area
- Wraxhill Park Equipped Play Area and Wraxhill Park Grass Area
- Woods Batch Play Area (play area only)
(Note: under a Maintenance Agreement initially)

b. Members received the Somerset Council Management Agreement.

Clerk's advice: The purpose of the agreement is to give Street Parish Council permission to access and maintain the sites whilst the freehold transfer takes place. The freehold process takes time as there are legal transfers involved. The aim is to get freehold transfers completed by end of 2025.

RESOLVED – to approve the Somerset Council Management Agreement for Play Areas and Open Spaces subject to requesting the removal of 'licence fees section'.

25/26.FC.079. Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be the take place at:

7pm on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.

There being no further business, at 8.17pm the Chair closed the meeting.

DRAFT