

Date of Meeting:	Thurs 10 th Sept 2026	Time:	19:30
Location of Meeting:	Lower (main Church) Hall, Westfield Church Hall		
Present:	Cllr. R. Leighton, Cllr. J. Johnstone, Cllr. G. Mansfield,		
In Attendance:	Tammy Roper (Clerk), Cllr. G. Slocombe (remotely via Zoom)		
Apologies:	Cllr. F. Smith, Cllr. J. Vassalli		

Ref:	Topic of Discussion
1-10/9/26	Chairman's Comments
	Chair welcomed everyone and explained where the fire exits are, in case of emergency. He also explained that a couple of our councillors are unable to attend for this meeting and wished Cllr. Vassalli a speedy recovery following his recent hip replacement.
2-10/9/26	New Haygrove School – Feedback from Public Consultation
	The Project Development Team (PDT) attended and introduced themselves. Development team representatives included: ▪ Department for Education (DfE) - Client ▪ Arcadis - Technical Advisors ▪ Willmott Dixon - Contractors ▪ Turley - Planning and Design Consultants Slides previously shown at the public consultation were shown/discussed again and noted that the site has long been identified as a site for a new school. The following key points were highlighted: Project Background ▪ Haygrove School is a 7 Form Entry (FE) school, and the existing site is already constrained in terms of space and logistics. ▪ The new site had previously been identified as necessary through the Building Schools for the Future Programme. ▪ The proposed site offers opportunities for future expansion should additional capacity be required in the medium to long term. ▪ The relocation is necessary following the emergency closure of the existing school building in August 2023, after it was deemed unsafe and condemned. Site Layout and Access ▪ The site presents a challenging layout. ▪ Access will be from the southern end of the Queenswood site. ▪ There are no access links available to the north of the site, including no access to Quantock Road. ▪ The proposed site lies on the edge of the school's catchment area. Approximately two-thirds of the way up the site falls within the Chilton Trinity School catchment area. The project team therefore wishes to ensure the new school remains within the existing Haygrove catchment. ▪ The site lends itself to sustainable travel.
3-10/9/26	Public Question Time
	A large number of residents attended the meeting. Also in attendance was Mark Weston, Office Manager for the Constituency Office of Ashley Fox MP.

Member of the public read email from Sir Ashley Fox MP stating that he thought the project development process had so far been shambolic. The member of public wanted assurance that it will be overseen and that someone will be taking responsibility. The following key points were raised in the response from the PDT:

Construction and Quality Assurance

- Willmott Dixon highlighted its previous delivery of the Northgate Cinema, presenting this as an example of the standard and quality they are aiming to achieve.
- Design brief tailored by DofE
- Arcadis will provide quality assurance through a Clerk of Works, who will be on site three days per week.
- Specialist inspectors will cover areas such as:
 - Building fabric
 - Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) systems
 - Other technical disciplines as required
 - Resident Concerns and Responses

It was further asked, “Financially, who is controlling the purse strings?” The PDT responded with the following areas:

- List of conditions in contract.
- Monthly valuations and quality evaluations.
- Quantity surveyor

Traffic and Highway Impact

A resident from Skimmerton Lane raised the following concerns:

- At public consultation told outside of border of school was not their responsibility.
- Disappointed with the depth of knowledge about surrounding area.
- The large catchment area, extending as far as Stogursey.
- The volume of traffic expected to travel to the new site.
- Potential traffic rat-running through Skimmerton Lane and the Durleigh Estate, particularly as local roads may struggle to accommodate increased traffic levels.

The project team responded that:

- The application is expected to be considered by the Planning Committee in the coming weeks.
- Proposed highway works include:
 - Road widening
 - New pavements
 - Additional crossing points
- Full details will be contained within the planning application.
- A vehicle turning area will be provided within the Haygrove site.
- More safety audits to come

Cllr. Gill Slocombe from Somerset Council further explained some of the points and highlighted:

- That Highways have done a better job than the last time (when school previously planned for this site)
- Residents were encouraged to review and comment on the detailed plans once published.

Building Position and Overlooking

A resident who had lived nearby for seven years raised concerns about:

- Overlooking from the new school building.
- The building being located closer to residential properties than previous proposals.
- House prices are being depressed.

The project team's response:

- The site layout required a balance between the building footprint, external spaces, and playing fields.
- The proposed location was considered the most efficient arrangement while accommodating all required facilities.
- Building nearer to the main cohort of pupils to encourage walking.
- The nearest houses would be approximately 30 metres from the building.

Residents maintained that:

- The distance was insufficient.
- There could be issues relating to overlooking and shadowing. Specific concerns that the building position will mean that lounges and bedrooms will be able to be seen into.
- Traffic associated with drop-off and pick-up periods remained a significant concern.

Pedestrian Crossings

Questions were raised about whether the crossings on the main road would be signal-controlled.

Response:

- The crossings are proposed as informal crossing points rather than signalised crossings.
- The rationale given was that large groups of students crossing together naturally stop traffic, reducing the need for signal controls.
- School operation and traffic management would be reviewed through a post-occupation audit approximately 12 months after opening.

A concerned resident / parent said that if the crossings were not signal controlled, he would be sending his children through Merridge Close, rather than down to Spaxton Road, as it would be safer.

Blocking of Local Roads with Pick up / Drop Off

A resident from Broadlands Lane expressed concerns that that parents will block Broadlands Lane with picking up and dropping off children.

The PDT responded:

- Pick up and drop spaces within the school site
- Only 14 % of pupils currently come to school by car.

Farm Traffic and West Bower Lane

A question was raised regarding the impact on agricultural vehicles using West Bower Lane.

Response:

- This had been considered within the traffic assessment.
- It would also be reviewed as part of the post-occupation audit.
- Residents and affected parties were encouraged to submit representations during the planning process and specifically list times of the year when farm traffic is heavier / more problematic.

Access through New Development

A resident questioned why they have not considered bringing the entrance for the school through new planned development in Quantock Road, working with the developers.

Response:

	- Most pupils come from the east, so would be impractical. General Traffic Concerns Additional concerns raised included: - The possibility of around 500 vehicles being present at peak times, although it was acknowledged that this figure may be overstated. - The impact of motorway closures potentially causing local roads to become rat-runs. The project team stated that: - Traffic assessments had been undertaken in consultation with the relevant highway authority. - The conclusions presented are based on those professional assessments. Cllr. Gill Slocombe made the following additional comments: - Broadlands Lane is private will not be accessed and there will be no access to the school via Merridge Close. - She asked the PDT to really consider the number of parking spaces for drop off/pick up. - Stated that whatever we think about active travel, because of location of school, parents will feel the safest way to get children to school is by car. All members of the public, except three, left at this point.
4-10/9/26	Declarations of Interest
	No Declarations of Interest were declared.
5-10/9/26	Planning Matters
	The three remaining members of the public stayed in relation to the planning application ref: 23/26/00002. Councillors agreed to move this agenda item forward.
	Items for Discussion:
23/26/00002	3 West Bower Cottages, West Bower Lane - Erection of two storey extension to the North & West elevations. Action: Clerk submit 'no comment' All remaining members of the public left at this point.
	Items for Update:
23/26/00001	Land to the West of Broadlands Lane and North of, Spaxton Road - Request for EIA Screening Opinion for a new 7-form entry secondary school (replacement of the existing 7-form entry Haygrove School) which is up to 5,500sqm Gross External Area (GEA) of education space (Use Class F1). This will include a sports hall detached from the main school building, a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), sports courts and pitches, and a hardstanding social area including seating areas, a car park, and vehicular and pedestrian access. The Proposed Development will be up to 2 storeys (up to 12m from FFL). No further update.
6-10/9/26	Minutes of Last Meeting
	Minutes from the July meeting was approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Mansfield, seconded by Cllr. Leighton. All agreed.
7-10/9/26	Update on Actions from Previous meeting
7.1	Vacancy – There has still been no interest, from persons eligible to become a councillor in the parish. Continue to push on website, social media and by word of mouth.

	Included in the Newsletter, distributed to all households within the parish at the end of August.																													
7.2	Grass cutting & Bin emptying – Councillors are still happy with the grass cutting and bins are being emptied regularly.																													
7.3	Durleigh Hill Road Safety – No further update has been received from Somerset Highways. Another accident, car burned out after crashing. Action: Clerk to follow up with Highways																													
7.4	Illegal Land Encroachment Luxborough Road – In conjunction with Ellis Belkes, the new boundary line was agreed and the fence has been moved. No further action required.																													
8-9/7/26	Matters Arising (Including Consultation Responses)																													
	None																													
9-10/9/26	Financial Matters																													
9.1	The Clerk reported that the Bank balance at 31st August 2026 was £16,669.08 Expenditure since then totals £150.79 <table><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Net Amount</td><td>VAT</td><td>Total</td></tr><tr><td>1/9/26</td><td>HMRC - Employers NI</td><td>£42.17</td><td>£0.00</td><td>£42.17</td></tr><tr><td>2/9/26</td><td>Purnells - printing of newsletter</td><td>£45.00</td><td>£0.00</td><td>£45.00</td></tr><tr><td>9/9/26</td><td>Sheet Plastics - new window for notice board (PayPal)</td><td>£37.77</td><td>£7.55</td><td>£45.32</td></tr><tr><td>10/9/26</td><td>Affixit - tape for notice board (PayPal)</td><td>£15.25</td><td>£3.05</td><td>£18.30</td></tr></table> Income since Totals £8,098.75 <table><tr><td>8/4/26</td><td>Somerset Council - Precept</td><td>A1</td><td>8,098.75</td></tr></table> This takes the bank balance to £24,617.04			Net Amount	VAT	Total	1/9/26	HMRC - Employers NI	£42.17	£0.00	£42.17	2/9/26	Purnells - printing of newsletter	£45.00	£0.00	£45.00	9/9/26	Sheet Plastics - new window for notice board (PayPal)	£37.77	£7.55	£45.32	10/9/26	Affixit - tape for notice board (PayPal)	£15.25	£3.05	£18.30	8/4/26	Somerset Council - Precept	A1	8,098.75
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9.2	The Clerk referred to the Finance Reports up to 31 August 2026 (Appendix 1), sent to all councillors prior to the meeting, which includes the cashbook showing expenditure, the actual expenditure against budget and the bank rec @31Aug. There were no questions or queries in regards to the finance reports and they were approved as accurate and complete. Proposed by Cllr. Leighton, Seconded by Cllr. Mansfield. All Agreed.																													
9.3	There are currently no payments waiting to be made. It was explained that all other payments that have been made are either all preapproved on the ‘Schedule of Payments 2026-27’ authorised at the March meeting, or are within the levels for delegated authority as detailed in the Financial Regulations. Therefore, these do not need further approval, but are just to note.																													
10-10/9/26	NJC Pay Award and Overtime																													
	The Clerk referred to documents sent to all councillors on 25/8/26. The NJC pay award was agreed on 24th Aug, back dated to 1 st April 2026.																													

	As per calculations provided to councillors, this will increase the Clerk's hourly rate to £18.44 per hour (£721.18 per month), which will require a change to the standing order to take effect from 28th September, 2026. Calculation of back pay was also sent to all councillors, and in line with the above pay rise, £115.37 is owed to the Clerk from April to August 2026 Approved by Cllr. Johnstone, Seconded by Cllr. Mansfield. All in agreement In addition, the Clerk has accrued a number of hours of time in lieu. Although a number of hours were worked down during August, a balance remains and therefore a request for 12 hours overtime to be paid was made. Approved by Cllr. Leighton, Seconded by Cllr. Mansfield. All in agreement
11-10/9/26	Salt Bins / Dumpy Bags
	The Clerk provided the following details: price for purchasing Salt/grit bins varies depending on capacity; approx. £150 for 400 litre, £95 for 200 litre From Somerset Council website: "Salt bins are purchased and maintained by parish and town councils and sited at locations agreed with us. We fill these at the start of winter when requested by parish and town councils and we will refill them on request during the season if resources allow." Decision: it was agreed not to purchase and salt/grit bins at the present time, but will review after school is built.
12-10/9/26	Donations
	The council considered whether to make a donation to the fundraiser for a defibrillator outside of West India house. Due to not all councillors being present, it was agreed to defer this to the next meeting.
13-10/9/26	Local Community Networks
	Due to Cllr. Vassalli's absence, no update was provided.
14-10/9/26	Meetings Attended
	None
15-10/9/26	Items for Next Agenda
	1. Donation for West India House
16-10/9/26	Date & Venue of Next Meeting
Date / Time:	Thurs 12 th November 2026
Venue:	Hembry Room, Westfield Church
Meeting Closed at: 20:51	

Minutes Signed by: Date:
(Chairman)



Minutes 2026