

HALSE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 2025 at 6:30 pm IN HALSE VILLAGE HALL

Present:	Mr I Walker	Chair
	Mrs S Haselock	
	Mr L Morris	Footpaths
	Mrs C Windeatt	Clerk to the Council
	Mr Dave Mansell	Somerset Councillor
Members of the Public in attendance:	Mr Tim Payne	

- The running order of the agenda was changed to allow Mr Tim Payne to discuss the grant application he had submitted on behalf of St James the Lesser Church at the beginning of the meeting, and left shortly after the grant had been approved.
- Cllr Mansell attended the meeting in its entirety and joined in discussions and cascaded information regarding Somerset Council as and when appropriate to the agenda items discussed.

	Report from County Councillor: • Cllr Mansell advised the meeting of the grim financial position of Somerset Council, which despite the redundancies and restructuring is anticipated to have a budget gap for the 2026/27 financial year of £100m. It is anticipated that the special approval agreement granted by central government will again be requested for the forthcoming financial year. Cllr Mansell advised that a large number of councils are in a similar position. • A Phase 2 Transformation Plan has been put in place, which will research the use of AI which it is hoped will lead to efficiency savings. Big spending cuts are anticipated, as there is no appetite within Somerset Council to increase council tax above the permitted limit set by central government. • Cllr Mansell concluded that Somerset Council is facing a challenging future. • Slinky Bus – Cllr Mansell advised that this service has been expanded and it is now possible, or will be in the very near future to book one hour in advance, currently you need to book two weeks in advance. There are no restrictions on who can use the service. • Action: Clerk to circulate information about the Slinky Bus service within the village.
1.	Apologies for Absence • Cllr Cameron Kinch sent his apologies and resigned as a councillor on 23rd September 2025. • Action: Clerk to post the Casual Vacancy notice on the noticeboard and advise Somerset West Electoral Services. DONE • Cllr Kathryn Robinson-Burge • Somerset Cllr Gwil Wren
2.	Declarations of Interest • None
3.	Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2025 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting be approved, proposed by Cllr Morris and seconded by the Cllr Haselock.

Signed.....Date

4.	Actions from Previous Meetings • Preston Bowyer Solar Farm The Chair has been advised by the land owner, Mr Roger King, that construction of the solar farm has been delayed from Autumn 2025 to Spring 2026. Further information was received from Mr Tim Payne, who advised the meeting that connection of the solar farm to the National Grid is not anticipated to take place until 2027. • It was confirmed that all other actions have been completed, or will be discussed at this meeting.																		
5. 5.1	Finance Schedule of Payments – the following payments were approved by councillors: <table><tr><td>Halse Village Hall</td><td>Hall Hire July & September</td><td>37.50</td></tr><tr><td>C Windeatt</td><td>2nd qtr salary payment</td><td>448.04</td></tr><tr><td>C Windeatt</td><td>2nd qtr expenses</td><td>44</td></tr><tr><td>HMRC</td><td>2nd qtr deductions</td><td>112.00</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2"></td><td></td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">TOTAL</td><td>£642.14</td></tr></table> As at 24/09/2025 the Reserve Account balance = £22,109.83 As at 24/09/2025 the Business Account balance = £2,425.99 Total £24,535.82	Halse Village Hall	Hall Hire July & September	37.50	C Windeatt	2nd qtr salary payment	448.04	C Windeatt	2nd qtr expenses	44	HMRC	2 nd qtr deductions	112.00				TOTAL		£642.14
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6. 6.1	Statutory Documents • Standing Orders – The revised Standing Orders, as issued by NALC had been circulated prior to the meeting for councillors to consider. The revised documented was adopted by the council. • Action: Clerk to upload the revised Standing Orders on the Halse Parish Council website – Done																		
7. 7.1	EV Chargers • The Chair had previously circulated an estimate received from Taun-Tech to replace the current FUUSE EV chargers, which have not worked for several months, despite an engineer visit from the company. • Cllr Mansell advised the meeting that Somerset Council has received grant funding of £3.8million from central government to install 1600 new charging points within Somerset, 25% should be installed in rural areas. This is a 17 year contract. Cllr Mansell also advised the meeting of the EV charger arrangements at Wiveliscombe, who use a local company, Somerset Electrical Services. • In conclusion it was agreed that the Chair will finalise the monthly running costs for two EV chargers with Taun-Tech and advise councillors, who approved in principle, replacing the EV chargers as per the Taun-Tech estimate. • Action: Chair to clarify monthly running costs with Taun-Tech and advice councillors, before signing new contract agreement.																		
8. 8.1	Roads and Footpaths Highways Report • The Chair advised that he had received a message from Mr Alan Lewis at Mount House regarding cars driving fast on the passed his house, and the entrance to the churchyard. Councillors discussed the issue of the speed limit within the village which is 60mph. • Action: Chair to contact Somerset Traffic Management for advice on signage permissible on Halse village roads and lanes																		

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8.2	• Footpaths Report • Cllr Morris advised the meeting of the successful clearance and footpaths and litter collection when volunteers met on Saturday 13 September and thanked everyone for their contribution. It was agreed Cllr Morris would organise two footpath clearance and litter pick up sessions per year, one in Spring and the other in the Autumn. Cllr Mansell advised the clerk of the email contact within Somerset Council for the supply of yellow footpath symbols. • Actions: Cllr Morris to replace footpath posts Clerk to contact Somerset Council re supply of yellow footpath symbol
9. 9.1	Planning Report on planning and related matters • No site visits have been received since the last meeting. • Cllr Mansell advised the clerk of the email contact details within Somerset Council for information regarding Tree Preservation Orders. • Action: Clerk to contact Somerset Council to obtain a map of trees within the parish subject to tree preservation orders.
10. 10.1	Grants Grant requests: Two requests had been received and were discussed: 1. St James the Lesser Church – A grant application had been received from Mr Tim Payne on behalf of St James the Lesser Church in the sum of £1350. Mr Payne addressed the meeting answering questions relating to how the monies will be spent. Cllr Haselock proposed and Cllr Morris seconded, the grant was approved. • Action: Clerk to liaise with Mr T Payne, Church Treasurer, to set up the payment. 2. Halse Village Hall – A grant application had been received from Mrs Nick Ellis on behalf of Halse Village Hall in the sum of £540. This application relates to the cost of installing an additional 3 phase consumer board in the village hall, to separate the electrics for the EV chargers which are managed by the Parish Council, from the village hall electrics. A decision regarding approval of this grant was suspended, pending the results of the Chair's discussions with Taun-Tech, as installation of the additional consumer board could be included within the new EV contract.
11.1	Clerk's Report • The clerk had circulated her report prior to the meeting, which covered the financial position and payments awaiting approval, and update on actions from previous minutes, which had all been completed satisfactorily. • Freedom of Information Request – An FOI had been received via email from James Hodgkinson, email address jame.hodgkinson@liberty.org.uk. This request had been acknowledged, and the clerk confirmed she will respond within the 20 days limit, or if this is not possible request an extension to 40 days, as permitted by the regulations. • Action: As noted above, and completed on 29 September 2025.
12. 12.1	Matters of Report including: Village Hall Report – • The village hall committee are continuing to research and spend the £10,000 decarbonisation grant monies which covers additional loft insulation, a new entrance door, thermal roller blinds, new instant electric water heaters in the kitchen and a new oven/cooker. • The first year's SEG payment had been received from EON Next and amounted to £1964. The installation of the solar panels at the village hall has significantly reduced the electricity costs for the hall.

Signed.....Date

12.2	Police Report • The PCSO's reports for July and August and had been circulated prior to the meeting.
12.3	Other – No other reports.
13.	Date of Next Meeting : Wednesday 19th November – 6:30 pm – Venue: Halse Village Hall
14..	Items for the next meeting : • Co-option of new councillor, following the advertising of the Casual Vacancy.

DRAFT

Signed.....Date