

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ISLE ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL

26/1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Present: Cllrs Lockley, Westworth, Hillman and vaun-Davis; the Clerk.

Apologies: Cllr Richards

26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

26/3 MINUTES: RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November were a correct record, and duly signed by the Chair.

26/4 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

a) New applications: There were no new applications to consider.

b) Planning Updates and Enforcement:

Application 19/00012/OUT – The old Horlicks site, Ilminster: The council noted withdrawal of the application for 150 houses, which it had submitted an objection to.

Applications 24/02962/FUL - 23/00961/FUL - The Stables site, Fivehead: A meeting took place with MP Sarah Dyke in December, where concerns regarding the further development of this site were raised by Isle Abbotts, Fivehead and Isle Brewers parish councils, and the number of sites already available in the area was highlighted. The council noted that the planning officers report recommends approval of the application.

Details of planning applications in the parish can be found on the Isle Abbotts website: <https://isle-abbotts-pc.gov.uk/planning> This links directly to the Somerset Council planning portal where the full responses from the parish council can be seen along with decision notices from Somerset Council.

26/5 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) BUDGET 2026/27

Two draft budget options were circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. Draft 1 largely repeated the current year's figures with higher operational spending, while Draft 2 reduced day-to-day costs, reallocates budgets more realistically. and. The clerk recommended draft 2 for its ability to strengthen reserves for future responsibilities and projects, without needing to make significant precept increase.

Having considered both drafts, councillors made an amendment to Draft 2 to move funds into a community grants budget line, and it was RESOLVED to agree the budget (a copy of annexed at the end of the minutes).

b) PRECEPT 2026/27

Having agreed the draft budget and considering the council's current financial position, it was RESOLVED to set the precept at £9800 for 2026/27, a 2.88% increase from 2025/26. This increase equates to a 0.14% increase to the household precept, approximately 15 pence per year for a Band D property.

c) FINANCIAL STATEMENT: RESOLVED to approve the financial statement to 31/12/25.

d) PAYMENTS: RESOLVED to approve the list of payments annexed at the end of the minutes. Noted that funds will now be moved to the Unity Trust bank account and the Lloyds account can be closed once the funds transfer is complete.

e) Savings/Investment:

To further strengthen the council's financial position, it was RESOLVED to keep a 2 month operational spend in the Unity Trust current account, with additional funds being moved to the reserve to gain a better interest return. Further funds will also be moved to longer term notice accounts, but the council will revisit and confirm exact amounts at the March meeting, once all funds have been transferred to Unity Trust.

26/6 INSURANCE: RESOLVED to remain with Zurich, who have provided a competitive renewal quote of £264 with no increase from last year. Renewal is due on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

26/7 PUBLICATION SCHEME: Councils are required to adopt a policy under the Freedom of Information Act, with a draft based on the ICO model policy having been circulated in advance of the meeting. RESOLVED to adopt the publication scheme as circulated. Cllr Hillman will review the website to ensure compliance.

26/8 WEBSITE: The website has been updated to a new gov.uk domain in line with recommendations and has also been updated to ensure it meets accessibility requirements. New email addresses linked to the gov.uk domain are in place for all councillors and the clerk, which can be found on the website <https://isle-abbotts-pc.gov.uk/>. The .org domain remains active with a re-direction for a limited time to ensure continuity of access for those with saved links and to prevent inappropriate use by other parties.

26/9 UPDATES

- a) LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORKS (LCN): There is a new Link Officer in place, experience so far has been positive. Discussions at the last meeting included the local plan; transport plan; and dualling of the A358, which was deemed too expensive.  
The next meeting is this week.
- b) HIGHWAYS:  
Cllr Lockley has been advised that the top dressing of Higher Woodlands to Ashford should have been completed during the previous programme and has been assured it will be completed in 2026/27.  
The two new flooding alert signs are in place, although the location of one is not ideal for visibility. This has been raised with Traffic Management to understand the location or see if it can be moved.  
Information on how to report a problem on the road to Somerset Council can be found [here](#)  
Details of road closures in the area can be found at <https://one.network/en-gb>
- c) RIGHTS OF WAY: No updates.  
Any issues on the rights of way network can be reported directly to Somerset Council using the interactive map which can be found [here](#).
- d) FLOODING: The Environment Agency were called out to a sewage discharge before Christmas but the results of their tests are not known.  
Appropriate weather is awaited for the works to clear Badbury ditch. This is anticipated around April. 2 cases have been raised for jetting of drainage channels at Badbury and the main village.
- e) VILLAGE HALL: No updates at this time. Will provide an update in March following the next scheduled meeting.
- f) OTHER MATTERS:  
Several gardens in the village will be opening on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May, in support of St Margaret's annual Glorious Gardens fundraiser. For more information and if interested in opening your garden please contact Cllr Vaughn-Davis for more information.  
The council expressed its sincere thanks to Cllr Lockley for her hard work, commitment and the considerable number of issues she has successfully steered through during her tenure. Her resignation at the end of the meeting, due to personal commitments preventing her from giving the time she felt the role required, was noted with genuine regret, and members acknowledged the significant loss her departure represents. The council wishes her well for the future, and look forward to seeing her around the village and as a member of the community at future meetings

26/10 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA: a) Grants policy; b) Savings and Investments

26/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting. 20.32

Signed.....

Date.....

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ANNEX. 1 – BUDGET

ACCOUNT	BUDGET 26/27
STAFF COSTS	2184
ADMIN COSTS (INCL SOFTWARE)	185
AUDIT	150
VILLAGE HALL RENT	160
VILLAGE WEBSITE	206
INSURANCE	300
SUBSCRIPTIONS & MEMBERSHIPS	190
DONATIONS & GRANTS	1300
LOCAL WORKS	300
MISCELLANEOUS/CONTINGENCY	350
TRAINING	200
DEFIBRILLATOR (INCL. TRAINING)	250
SOMERSET COUNCIL LOSS OF SERVICES	1500
GRIT BINS	100
DRAIN/GULLEY CLEARANCE	1000
RIGHTS OF WAY MAINTENANCE	1500
ENHANCED HIGHWAYS SERVICES	
VAT	968
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL COSTS</b>	<b>10843</b>
<b><u>EARMARKED RESERVES</u></b>	
CLERK IT EQUIPMENT	150
SC LOSS OF SERVICE CONTINGENCY	3500
NOTICEBOARD	800
EVENTS	500
ELECTION COSTS	2000
<b>Total Reserves/Projects</b>	<b>6950</b>

ANNEX. 2 – PAYMENTS

Invoice date	Payee	Description	Amount
19/11/2025	TEEC	gov.uk domain and website template	£ 120.00
31/10/2025	K LARSSON	ADMIN EXPENSES	£ 5.14

Payments since the last meeting

28/11/2025	Lloyds Bank	Service Fee	£ 4.25
29/12/2025	Lloyds Bank	Service Fee	£ 4.25

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