KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 9th DECEMBER 2025
AT THE VILLAGE HALL, KINGSTON ST MARY, STARTING AT 19.00

Item No	Item	Action By
1.0	**Attendance and Apologies -** In attendance: Cllr P Townsend (Chairman) Cllr P Boyce Cllr D Darch Cllr S Hancock Cllr A Simpson Cllr D Stripp Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) Apologies: Cllr D Perry (Somerset) There were no members of the public in attendance.	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 11th November 2025** **Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and will be signed as a true record at a future date.	
4.0	**Planning** a) **Applications -** **Case Ref: 20/25/0038/T** - Notification to fell 12 Lombardy Poplar trees within Kingston St. Mary Conservation Area at The Willows, Lodes Lane, Kingston St. Mary The Council was unable to support this application, due to lack of sufficient information and requested that a detailed arboreal report be provided, by a suitably qualified expert, to assess the health of each tree and determine which (if any) should be removed. Please note that the Parish Council's full response to the above planning application can be found on Somerset Council's website or by following the link below. https://www3.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/asp/webpages/plan/plapplookup.asp	
5.0	**Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes -** i. **Internet Banking** – The Council agreed to carry this forward. ii. **Noticeboard** – The Clerk advised there was no further update. She said we are waiting for Highways to erect the notice at the site of the proposed noticeboard. iii. **Speed Indicator Device -** The Chair advised he has written to the owners of Westhay Cottage to ask for their agreement in siting a SID within proximity to their drive. Once they respond, the Council we will be able to get Somerset Council planners involved. iv. **Parish Council Highway Works** – The Chair advised there was no news on highway works. v. **Somerset Council Planning's Firebreak** – Cllr Darch read a message she received from Somerset Cllr Derek Perry regarding this agenda item. He had written to the relevant portfolio holder who responded saying it was likely a representation received shortly after the 21-day period will still be looked at	Chair/Clerk Clerk Chair Clerk

		and not disregarded. The Council agreed the Clerk would advise Somerset Planning when the PC would not be able to make a representation in time and provide the date of the PC's next meeting and timeframe for submission of the PC's representation. If it was deemed imperative the Council discuss an application and respond within the allotted timeframe an extraordinary meeting of the Council would then need to be called.	
	vi.	**Kingston St Mary Rapid Response Catchment** Area – The Chair advised the leaflets had been printed and were ready for collection. The Council discussed how best to distribute the leaflets and agreed to speak to Link-Up and Character Graphics about inserting the leaflets in the January edition of Link-Up.	Chair/Cllr Stripp
	vii.	**The Grange, Taunton School** – The Chair advised the Grange is back on the market and said the Director of Estates has passed on our concerns to the Governors regarding the path to the Spinney.	
	viii.	**AGAR 2025/26** – Assertion 10 – Digital & Data Compliance - The Clerk advised she was attending a SALC training session tomorrow and would pass on any more relevant details to the Council. She advised the Council needs to put together an IT Policy and a GDPR Policy. These policies should be reviewed annually and implemented daily. She also said she had discussed website accessibility with the webmaster. He assured her the website was accessible. He did say there may be a few Council documents uploaded to the website which aren't and these are mentioned in the accessibility statement as an exception. The Clerk said the changes above needed to be implemented by June 2026.	Clerk
	ix.	**Dogs on the playing field** – The Council discussed this matter in detail and then decided the best way forward was to pass it on to the Playing Field Committee. The Clerk advised the September 2025 issue of Link-Up had information about dogs on the playing field.	
6.0	**Local Government Boundary Commission for England** - reopening of consultation on proposed new division boundaries for Somerset Council The Chair advised the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had re-opened this consultation due to confusion around single-member wards and the consultation will now run until 14th January. The Chair advised there was no need for the Council to take any further action.		
7.0	**Climate Emergency** – update Cllr Darch summarised the flood network meeting she attended and referred the Council to the notes she had sent. The meeting was attended by a small group of Parish Councillors from flood risk areas. It was agreed a larger representation was needed. The meeting was chaired by Bel Deering, Somerset Rivers Authority Community Engagement Officer and it was an initial meeting asking the group what we wanted. After lengthy discussion, it was agreed the following was needed: meaningful collaboration with different organisations; a catchment wide focus; education and knowledge about flooding and knowing which organisation is responsible for what. The next meeting will be held in person, and the chair will try to get representatives from the various relevant organisations to attend. Cllr Darch agreed to share a publication about emergency planning produced and distributed by the Dutch Government to 9m households in the Netherlands. The Chair asked about the Quantock Hills Management Plan. Cllr Darch said it was a good read and agreed it was long but worth just looking at the headings/summary.		Cllr Darch

8.0	**Playing Field Committee** – update The Chair advised the storage unit is now in place. The Council agreed to formally thank Peter House for his assistance on the day.	Cllr Stripp
9.0	**Local Community Network** – update Cllr Stripp advised the Council about a meeting to discuss the wider impact on the LCN of the uplift in the workforce at Hinkley Point which is expected to peak at 15,000 in summer 2026. He went on to say that significant funds are available in the HPC community fund for local projects and parishes were encouraged to consider potential applications by contacting Somerset Community Foundation. Cllr Stripp updated the Council on the progress and activities of the Children and Young Peoples' Working Group. He also said the other Councils in the LCN all seemed very positive about funding the activities for another year. The Chair advised the next LCN meeting was on Thursday at West Monkton Village Hall. He went on to say that one of the initiatives from the LCN is, if there are any major developments over 50 houses, to get the LCN together to consider the wider impact of the development.	
10.0	**Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust** – Update Cllr Stripp updated the Council on the CLT's progress regarding the Active Travel Route.	
11.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – Update Cllr Simpson and Cllr Stripp discussed with the Council the festive grant and who might benefit from it as well as how the gifts may be distributed. Cllrs Simpson and Stripp agreed to get together to sort this out. Cllr Stripp reminded the Council the next litter pick is on the 13th & 14th December. He also said the date for the fete is 13th June 2026 so please save the date!	Cllr Simpson/Cllr Stripp
12.0	**Financial Matters –** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved it as well as approved the following payments: • £500.00 – Kingston Community Partnership, annual donation • £30.00 – Paul Townsend, payment to Character Graphics for printing KSM Parish map • £145.00 – Character Graphics, printing of Environment Agency Flash Flooding Leaflets	
13.0	**Items for Next Agenda –** Please pass any other agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting.	
14.0	**Items for Link-Up and KSM Website –** The Chair will submit a write up for Link-Up.	
15.0	**Date of Next Meeting – 13th January 2026** The meeting closed at 20:17	
Signed:		

Dated:		