MINUTES OF HIGH HAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT HIGH HAM VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 22nd September 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Rob Rice (Chair), Catherine Roberts, Dave Vigar, Nick Fear.

V Young (Clerk).

Unitary Councillors: Richard Wilkins
Public approx: 4

Meeting opened at 7.30pm

1) Apologies and declarations of interest: Nancy Green and Rob Webb had sent apologies and these were accepted. Mike Stanton (Unitary Councillor) had also sent apologies. Apologies had been received from 2 parishioners.

Declarations of Interest. - Dave Vigar declared a non prejudicial interest in planning application 3B.

2) Public Session – Rob Rice informed the meeting that Amanda Chuter had resigned. Amanda Chuter was thanked for all her hard work and dedication to Parish Council matters over her tenure as a councillor. A parishioner introduced himself to the meeting and confirmed that he would be willing to be co-opted on to the council. There was a further parishioner interested who could not attend this evening so the individual introduced himself to the meeting and would sit in the meeting to see what it was like. If still interested at the end of the meeting he would let the clerk know. The matter of co-option would go on the October 2026 agenda.

There had been concern about static caravans in Bere Woods. Nick Fear had asked the enquirer to contact the Unitary Council about the matter since they would know what was allowed at this site and what wasn't.

3) Planning applications for consideration:
A) 26/01915/FUL Proposal: Erection of a new agricultural building (part retrospective application) Location: Land Os 7279 Broadacre Henley Langport Somerset TA10 9AY – the application met with a vote of 3 no objections and one abstention.

B) 26/02043/HOU Proposal: Erection of a first floor extension to incorporate a guest room and shower room - as previously approved 12/04572/FUL (2012) and changes to other windows and doors on North East elevation Location: Bridge Cottage Henley Bridge Road High Ham Langport Somerset TA10 9BH - Dave Vigar left the meeting whilst this application was discussed. It was confirmed the meeting was still quorate. The application met with unanimous support.

C) 26/02148/AGN Proposal: Application for prior notification of agricultural development for the erection of an agricultural building for housing livestock Location: Decoy Farm Henley Langport Somerset TA10 9AY – Notification only – It had been determined that a full planning application was not required.

Unitary Councillor Richard Wilkins joined the meeting and was asked about the changing planning regulations coming into effect in October. There were concerned that local knowledge views would not be considered. There was discussion with regard to what amounted to a settlement when it came to the presumption to favour planning applications in settlements. Many hamlets would lose their rural nature and would these be included as places to favour fervent 'building' if they were considered 'settlements'. It was felt that there was very little protection for open countryside areas.

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4) Applications decided

It was noted that application 3C (above) had been granted.

26/01254/HOU - Retrospective application at Rosemary Cottage – (retention of conservatory and garden building) - Granted

26/01607/DOC1 – Land At Windmill Road High Ham - Discharge of Condition Number 4 (Access) of planning application 26/00213/FUL - Granted

5) Unitary Councillor report - Mike Stanton was to stand down as Chairman of Somerset Rivers Authority. Steve Ashton, who would be standing again next year, was taking on the Chairmanship.
It was noted that the roadworks at Burrowbridge were due to be completed soon.
Questions were asked about the SWEP (severe weather emergency protocol) and if it included both hot and cold weather. It was noted that overnight temps between 4 – 0 C for 3 nights running also triggered the protocol but that it could also be activated in other severe conditions.
It was noted that the school barrier had been damaged again over the summer holiday period.
Richard Wilkins was informed about the caravans in Bere Lane. Mike Stanton's and Richard Wilkins' thanks and best wishes to Amanda Chuter were passed on.

6) Minutes of the last meetings The minutes of the meeting held on 28th July 2026 were approved as a true record.

7) Action Points

Lengthsmans Report – Work was continuing as scheduled. The report would be forwarded when available.

Highways – It was thought that the 'parking buddies' by the school had helped. Drains by 'Fountain' ad been cleaned last year and were on the rota held by the unitary council for cleaning every two years. Richard Wilkins would chase up the matter with regard to the broken school barrier. Three blocked drains had been cleared at the junction of Field Road and Burrow Lane. Some further investigations were being carried out, however, considering the scale of repairs required unlikely to be done in this financial year.
With regard to Picts Hill, an email had been received confirming that the SID post will shortly be in place where agreed. It was noted that a SID post was now in place outside Kelways. It was noted that this SID site could be used in both directions. A signpost had been knocked over but highways had already replaced it. New repeater signs will be put on Picts Hil, New Way. A 30 mph sign at Wearne Wynch had been knocked round and highways had been asked to turn it back around.

Footpaths - Finger posts had been reattached to some footpath waypoints where they had been missing.

Millennium Wood – as per lengthsman report.

Parish Green – Tim Lawton was thanked for his quick response and the trickle bags provided for the trees on the green in the heat of the summer. Viv and Roger Hall were also thanked for topping these up as needed. The post which had been knocked down most recently had been found but there were two missing still. It was unanimously agreed that Dave Vigar could spend up to £300 on matching posts from Yandles of Martock and reflectors to replace these.

Playing Fields – Derek Deighton had sent in the playing fields report. A fundraising 'Wassail' was being organised for 23rd January 2027. It was also hoped to provide a community event of some kind in May. Mike Cox was to be asked to cut back some of the boundary grass around the very edge of the Playing Fields. The fete would not take place next year.

Cemetery – Matters were progressing with the issues reported at the last meeting. It had been agreed and confirmed with the contractor to sort out the uneven grave area as agreed at the last

meeting. The drainage dip/hole was in hand. John Vigar was thanked for mowing/topping the wild area of the cemetery.
Defibrillators – The defibrillator batteries had been replaced as required.
Village Hall – The Village Hall committee had thanked the Parish Council for the grant to help with upkeep. A quiz night was planned for 17th October. Lego Club had proved popular.
School – As previously noted the school barrier outside the front on the edge of the road had been damaged and knocked down by a lorry.
Phone booths – No matters arising
Church – No matters arising
Other – Finger Posts - The post at One Elm would be repainted next. Roger Powell and Dave Vigar were thanked for volunteering.
Carols around the tree – The date was set as Saturday 19th December 2026. Councillors to come back next month to suggest and agree a charity to support.

8) Correspondence and Meetings – An LCN meeting was due to take place tomorrow. (Active Travel subgroup). A flood group meeting re River Parrett to take place tomorrow.

9) Financial
The following payments were authorised:
Lengthsman - £660.00
Clerk's wages - £469.60
Cemetery & Village Green Mowing Contract - £382.67
M Cox – re mowing playing fields (on invoice)
Grant request Lunch Club - £125.00 (50% was granted as it was felt that for the items requested individuals attending could match this amount for a one off extra fee that was not onerous. (unanimously agreed).
CLT - £275.00
PKF Audit fee - £252.00

10) Date of next meeting - confirmed as 27th October 2026 at 7.30pm.

11) Items for next meeting. Co-option of Councillor was to go on the next agenda
With no other business the meeting was closed at 9.15pm