

DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Councillors, you are summoned to the Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 @7.00pm in the David Willis Room, Donyatt Village Hall.



Clerk to the Council

1. **Public question time including Somerset County councillor reports.**
2. **To receive any apologies for absence.**
3. **To receive any declarations of interest and approve any dispensations.**
4. **Community Emergency Plan**
5. **To approve minutes of the meeting held on 09th September 2025.**
6. **Review action points and update from last meeting held on 09th September.**
 - a. **Update re cycle way Chard-Ilminster**
 - b. **Flood Alleviation Plans**
 - c. **Donyatt Halt update**
7. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
 - a) **Approve & sign Bank statements to date.**
 - b) **Current account £549.63 Instant access Account £16136.50 Total funds held: £16686.13.**
 - c) **To approve and sign bank reconciliations**
 - d) **Payment requests for authorisation**
8. **Up date re flooding in Sea.**
9. **To consider DPC Budget 2026/7**
10. **Planning Matters:**
 - a. **Pond Farm**
 - b. **Sweet Chestnut Tree – Downs Farm**
11. **Long Rapp plantation clearance**
12. **Traffic data/SID report.**
13. **Website accessibility compliance & gov.uk update/Assertion 10 (AGAR)**
14. **CiLCA training & costs.**

SALC	CiLCA training	1/3 share	100.00
------	----------------	-----------	--------

SC	Dog bin emptying charges	2025/6	811.20
REGULAR PAYMENTS TO NOTE			
Salary	SO	28 th monthly	361.55
HMRC	SP	28 th monthly	82.26

DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 09th September 2025 @ 7pm in the David Willis Room, Donyatt Village Hall.

Present@ Cllr D Light, Chairman, Cllrs K Light, S Payne, G Wilson & J McKenzie.

25/70 Public question time including Somerset County councillor reports. No members of the public were present and no ward Councillor report had been received.

25/71 To receive any apologies for absence. Cllr J Attlesey

25/72 To receive any declarations of interest and approve any dispensations. None were received.

25/73 To approve minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2025. The minutes were approved and signed.

25/74 Review action points and update from last meeting held on 15th July 2025

- a. Drainage works at Stibbear Lane. Noted that since the completion of these works, heavy rain has not resulted in localised flooding.
- b. Update re Cycleway Chard- Ilminster. Noted that localised clearance had been completed by a local volunteer. Clearance of cycle path from Chard – through Ilminster will continue according to seasonal requirements.
- c. Flood Alleviation Plans – updates. Noted that roadside gutters need clearing, in places they overgrow the gutters and prevent drainage. SC Highways have indicated that further works will be scheduled for the 2026/7 budget. Clerk noted that emails going back to 2021 this budget provision has been noted on several occasions. Cllr McKenzie will review the flood prevention grant form and submit it if appropriate.

25/75 FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a) Approve & sign Bank statements to date. Noted and signed.
- b) Current account £2119.85 Instant access Account £16045.50 Total funds held: £18995.45. Noted
- c) To approve and sign bank reconciliations. Noted & signed
- d) Payment requests for authorisation. – Authorised. Clerk noted that the WFH allowance should have been paid at £26pcm not £10pcm.
- e) Pre budget planning/requests. Clerk noted that in the absence of Cllr Osborne the PC were not able to ascertain any potential election costs.

25/76 ONGOING ISSUES

- Traffic calming measures through Sea. The introduction of the 40mph limit is proving effective. Further signage and evaluation will be implemented prior to formal completion of the project.
- Canal Way – update. Construction of the first 97 units will commence in March 2026 with occupation commencing in September 2026.
- Drainage & Flood Prevention – Flood alleviation plans/flooding through Sea. Cllr McKenzie reported that local Sea residents remained concerned re flooding, some low level ditch clearance has been carried out. Flood prevention grants are available to local communities, not just to the Parish.

25/77 Planning Applications:

- a) **Proposal:** Replace existing conservatory, garage and porch with the erection of a single storey side extension, new detached garage and new porch. Erection of a two storey extension to rear and change of use of part of land to the north to residential garden
Location: Burrige Cottage Stibbear Lane Donyatt Ilminster Somerset TA19 0SQ
Applicant: Mr James Attlesey
Application Type : Full Application
Application Number: 25/01973/FUL
Link to related documents: [25/01973/FUL | Replace existing conservatory, garage and porch with the erection of a single storey side extension, new detached garage and new porch. Erection of a two storey extension to rear and change of use of part of land to the north to residential garden | Burrige Cottage Stibbear Lane Donyatt Ilminster Somerset TA19 0SQ ..](#)
- b) **Proposal:** The erection of a detached four bedroomed dwelling, replacing the fall-back Class Q (Approval No: 24/00425/PAMB) scheme, for two one bedroomed units
Location: Sea Mills Farm Greenway Dowlish Ford Ilminster Somerset TA19 0SF
Applicant: Mr and Mrs N Charles
Application Type : Full Application
Application Number: 25/02079/FUL
Link to related documents: [25/02079/FUL | The erection of a detached four bedroomed dwelling, replacing the fall-back Class Q \(Approval No: 24/00425/PAMB\) scheme, for two one bedroomed units | Sea Mills Farm Greenway Dowlish Ford Ilminster Somerset TA19 0SF.](#)

- 25/78** **Grit bins** – SC request confirm location and status. Confirmed that bins remain in noted locations and do not require extra filling.
- 25/79** **Parish Matters:** Flytipping at Watery Lane. Noted that some of watery lane is outside Donyatt Parish. Clerk to contact Donyatt Despatch advising resident that if they witness flytipping this can be reported to Avon & Somerset Police Force.
- 25/80** **Footpath maintenance.** After discussion it was agreed that landowners are responsible for maintaining footpaths. DPC are unable to use public funds for maintenance of areas/facilities that are owned by a third party.
- 25/81** **Clerk/Cllr training.** Clerk noted that Cllr training is available and recommended for all Cllrs to update their knowledge base. Noted that Cllrs are not willing to use public funds for a perceived irrelevant matter. Clerk intends to commence CiLCA in December 2025. The cost is circa £795 which will be split across three councils. DPC is happy for Clerk to identify and complete relevant training webinars/events. Study time for CiLCA to be confirmed, there are five in person days in Wells & a time commitment of 200hrs over 12 months.

25/82 **Reports to note:** Noted as information reports.

- a. SC Playing Pitch Strategy
- b. SC Invest Somerset
- c. SC Consultation on D Sunday parking charges
- d. Flags & Painting on roads.

09/09/2025	PATAS	Audit fee	165.00
09/09/25	Clerk	Increment/rate increase/backpay	£107.20
09/09/2025	DVH	Hall Hire/July	16.00
09/09/2025	DVH	Hall Hire/September	16.00
09/09/25	NALC	Clerk training 50%	21.00
REGULAR PAYMENTS TO NOTE			
Salary	SO	28 th monthly	361.55
HMRC	SP	28 th monthly	82.26

Meeting closed at 20.45hrs

Next meeting November 11th @ 7pm.

September	October	2025	CURRENT ACCOUNT		Income	Expenditure
	31-Aug-25		Bank charges			6
	10-Sep-25		Clerk training			144
	23-Sep-25		Audit			165
	23-Sep-25		DVH			32
	23-Sep-25		Parish Online	Website		258
	23-Sep-25		Clerk backpay/increment			85.76
	23-Sep-25		HMRC			21.44
	29-Sep-25		Clerk salary			333.64
	29-Sep-25		HMRC			78.41
	30-Sep-25		Bank charges			6
	28-Oct-25		Clerk salary			361.56
	28-Oct-25		HMRC			78.41
						1570.2
			Opening Balance		2,119.85	
			Expenditure		1,570.22	
			Income			
				28/10/2025	549.63	
			RESERVE ACCOUNT			
	01-Apr-25			Opening balance	20706.78	
	11-May-25		Transfer to C/A	Grants		4750
	30-Jun-25		Interest		88.72	
	30-Sep-25		Interest		91.00	
					20886.50	4750
	30-Sep-25		Balance		16136.50	
			28th October 2025	Total funds held	16686.13	
			Signed			
			Date:			

DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2026/7					
Expenditure	2025/6 BUDGET	Year to date	To YE	Variance	2026/7 Budget
Hall hire	160.00	64	48.00	48.00	150
Insurance	300.00	0	300.00	0.00	350
Audit	150.00	165	0.00	-15.00	200
Admin expenses	150.00	36.33	75.00	38.67	200
Clerk equipment reserve	135.00	0		135.00	350
Clerk salary	4040.00	3302.76	2650.00	-1912.76	5500
Bank charges - Unity Bank	75.00	36	36.00	3.00	100
Training	165.00	251	720.00	-806.00	1450
SLCC & CRPP & CCS	125.00		0.00	125.00	200
Salc subs	140.00	196.68	0.00	-56.68	250
Election	500.00		0.00	500.00	2350
SC Devolved services	1500.00		812.00	688.00	1500
Website hosting	50.00	258	0.00	-208.00	400
Village events	1500.00	599.5	250.00	650.50	1000
DVH Grant	2000.00	2000	0.00	0.00	2000
DRAC Grant	1500.00	1600	0.00	-100.00	1500
St Mary's Church grant	1250.00	1250	0.00	0.00	1250
SIDS installation 2025	3250.00	3000	0.00	250.00	0
Transfer to reserves	3000.00		0.00	3000.00	3000
2025/6 Total Budget	19990.00	12759.27	4891.00	17650.27	21750
Precept inflationary increase@ 3.8% plus election provision					21750
Opening balance 31/03/2025 Current /ac	3543.03				
Income/precept	2990				
Transfer from reserves	4750				
CIL payment	1220.4				

Vat refund	805.47	
	549.63	
Reserves 31/03/2025	3709.78	
Precept	17000	
Interest	176.72	
Transfer to c/a	4750	
	16136.5	
Unity Bank balances October 2025		
Current a/c	549.63	
Reserves	16136.5	
Total held	16686.13	
Less YE predictions	4891.00	Less year end predictions against total funds held
Total reserves carried forward	11795.13	
Reserves breakdown		
Admin/running costs	1500	
Equipment/asset replacement reserve	1074.73	
Election costs	4500	
Parish projects	1500	
SC devolved services provision	2000	
CIL funds	1220.4	
	11795.13	

Monthly Summary Report SOMERSET_ATC 00000005047 January to August 2025

Site Name 00000005047 - Peasmarsh A358, N of Chard

Site ID 00000005047

Description CHARD - Peasmarsh A358, N of Chard, South Somerset RTEM

Lanes Each Lane

Exclude data: None

All directions							
	<--	Workday			-->	<--	7 Day
Date	12Hr	16Hr	18Hr	24Hr	12Hr	16Hr	
Jan 2025	9418	10751	11019	11399	8667	9843	
Feb 2025	10044	11488	11771	12148	9382	10686	
Mar 2025	10621	12095	12355	12732	10054	11408	
Apr 2025	10331	11820	12098	12435	9604	10980	
May 2025	9733	11250	11558	11941	9168	10592	
Jun 2025	10225	11854	12173	12596	9585	11087	
Jul 2025	9992	11539	11857	12253	9358	10776	
Aug 2025	10368	12007	12342	12742	9784	11328	
North							
	<--	Workday			-->	<--	7 Day
Date	12Hr	16Hr	18Hr	24Hr	12Hr	16Hr	
Jan 2025	4598	5259	5363	5586	4258	4834	
Feb 2025	4892	5601	5702	5922	4604	5235	
Mar 2025	5183	5909	6004	6234	4947	5605	
Apr 2025	4923	5627	5724	5902	4610	5256	
May 2025	4802	5522	5634	5850	4532	5210	
Jun 2025	4979	5774	5896	6138	4706	5442	
Jul 2025	4879	5629	5753	5974	4608	5296	
Aug 2025	5084	5877	6013	6249	4826	5576	
South							
	<--	Workday			-->	<--	7 Day
Date	12Hr	16Hr	18Hr	24Hr	12Hr	16Hr	
Jan 2025	4820	5492	5657	5813	4409	5009	
Feb 2025	5152	5887	6069	6227	4778	5451	
Mar 2025	5438	6185	6351	6497	5108	5803	

Apr 2025	5408	6192	6374	6533	4994	5724
May 2025	4931	5728	5924	6091	4636	5382
Jun 2025	5246	6079	6277	6458	4879	5646
Jul 2025	5114	5909	6104	6279	4750	5481
Aug 2025	5284	6130	6328	6493	4958	5751

Event key:



QC Failure

QC Outlier



QC Atypical

Weekends and defined holidays

Notes on data:

Weekly (7-day) averages are calculated as the average of workday values and weekend values, weighted in the p

Holidays & Events:

Start	End	Type	Lanes
21/12/2024 00:00	05/01/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
01/01/2025 00:00	01/01/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
01/01/2025 00:00	01/01/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
15/02/2025 00:00	23/02/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
05/04/2025 00:00	21/04/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
18/04/2025 00:00	18/04/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
18/04/2025 00:00	18/04/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
21/04/2025 00:00	21/04/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
21/04/2025 00:00	21/04/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
05/05/2025 00:00	05/05/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
05/05/2025 00:00	05/05/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
24/05/2025 00:00	01/06/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
26/05/2025 00:00	26/05/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
26/05/2025 00:00	26/05/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
16/06/2025 00:00	06/09/2025 23:44	Road Closure	-
25/06/2025 00:00	29/06/2025 23:44	Special	-
24/07/2025 00:00	01/09/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
25/08/2025 00:00	25/08/2025 23:59	Holiday	-
25/08/2025 00:00	25/08/2025 23:59	Holiday	-

y	-->	<--	Workday				7 D
18Hr	24Hr	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow	pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow
10092	10445	07:00:00	822	16:00:00	970	11:00:00	725
10963	11321	08:00:00	871	16:00:00	1018	11:00:00	790
11672	12025	08:00:00	1090	16:00:00	1082	08:00:00	899
11257	11578	11:00:00	864	16:00:00	1056	11:00:00	860
10905	11274	10:00:00	808	16:00:00	961	10:00:00	801
11406	11819	08:00:00	943	16:00:00	1052	11:00:00	800
11102	11485	08:00:00	881	17:00:00	998	09:00:00	784
11663	12041	09:00:00	897	17:00:00	1042	10:00:00	849

y	-->	<--	Workday				7 D
18Hr	24Hr	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow	pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow
4930	5131	07:00:00	471	16:00:00	435	07:00:00	371
5336	5537	07:00:00	485	16:00:00	455	11:00:00	403
5702	5909	08:00:00	572	16:00:00	503	08:00:00	475
5353	5516	11:00:00	435	16:00:00	472	11:00:00	431
5327	5526	07:00:00	443	16:00:00	444	10:00:00	425
5564	5783	07:00:00	511	16:00:00	483	09:00:00	419
5424	5631	07:00:00	481	16:00:00	439	09:00:00	424
5714	5930	09:00:00	487	16:00:00	455	09:00:00	453

y	-->	<--	Workday				7 D
18Hr	24Hr	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow	pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow	am Peak Hour	am Peak Flow
5162	5314	08:00:00	388	16:00:00	536	11:00:00	360
5628	5784	08:00:00	416	16:00:00	564	11:00:00	387
5970	6116	08:00:00	518	17:00:00	603	08:00:00	424

5904	6063	08:00:00	441	17:00:00	593	11:00:00	429
5578	5748	11:00:00	384	17:00:00	526	11:00:00	395
5842	6036	08:00:00	459	17:00:00	588	11:00:00	392
5678	5854	08:00:00	420	17:00:00	573	11:00:00	380
5949	6112	09:00:00	409	17:00:00	601	11:00:00	410

Events  Special  Holiday Offline
 Holiday-affected days

proportion 5:2.

- | Included | Description |
|----------|---|
| Yes | School holidays |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |
| Yes | School holidays |
| Yes | School holidays |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |
| Yes | School holidays |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |
| Yes | Chelston Link Closed For Resurfacing For Approximately 3 Months |
| Yes | 2025 Glastonbury Festival |
| Yes | School holidays |
| Yes | Holiday |
| Yes | Public holiday |

Day	-->
pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow
16:00:00	865
16:00:00	927
16:00:00	996
16:00:00	956
16:00:00	876
16:00:00	943
17:00:00	898
17:00:00	948

Day	-->
pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow
16:00:00	393
16:00:00	425
16:00:00	476
16:00:00	436
16:00:00	411
16:00:00	439
16:00:00	401
16:00:00	426

Day	-->
pm Peak Hour	pm Peak Flow
16:00:00	472
16:00:00	502
17:00:00	536

16:00:00	520
17:00:00	468
17:00:00	515
17:00:00	505
17:00:00	533

The Annual Governance Statement 25/26

A FOCUS ON THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT OF THE AGAR INCLUDING THE NEW ASSERTION 10 REQUIREMENTS

1

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Assert		Yes means that this authority
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to ensure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electoral rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority, and where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable, in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the trust assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A Has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on: DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference: MINUTE REFERENCE

Chair: SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk: SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

The authority's website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published. Yes No

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

The Annual Governance Statement

2

Assertion 1:

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PREPARATION OF ACCOUNTS

3

We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.

ASSERTION 1

4

Assertion 1: Financial management and preparation of accounts

Budgeting:

- The council needs to have prepared and approved a budget in a timely manner before setting a precept or rates and prior to the commencement of the financial year.
- It needs to monitor actual performance against its budget during the year, taking corrective action where necessary.
- A financial appraisal needs to be undertaken before the authority commences any significant project or enters into any long-term commitments.

5

Assertion 1: Financial management and preparation of accounts

Accounting Records and supporting documents:

- Appoint an Officer as the RFO
- Chair of the Council (or Finance Committee) should never be appointed (even on a short-term basis) either as Clerk or as RFO.
- RFO to ensure that the financial control systems are observed and that the accounting records are kept up to date.

The financial control systems must include:

- measures to ensure that the financial transactions of the authority are recorded as soon as, and as accurately as, reasonably practicable;
- measures to enable the prevention and the detection of inaccuracies and fraud, and the reconstitution of any lost records;
- measures to ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
- Identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers.

6

Bank Reconciliation		As at 31 March 20XX			
Authority Name					
Balance as per bank statement on 31 March 20XX					
		Account No.		£	£
Current account	Mybank Plc	12345678		10,000.00	
Instant Access	Mybank Plc	24681357		3,000.00	
Savings account	Former Bld Society Plc	97538642		10,000.00	
Petty cash tin				100.00	
					23,100.00
Less uncleared cheques					
	154			-60.00	
	157			-350.00	
					-410.00
Add unbanked cash and income					
	Allotment fees			50.00	
					50.00
Accounting system cash book balance as at 31 March 20XX					22,740.00
Prepared by	(Name of RFO)			on	
Approved by	(Minute reference of authority approval)			on	

Assertion 1:
Financial management and preparation of accounts

Bank Reconciliation:

Statements reconciling each of the authority's bank accounts with its accounting records need to be prepared on a regular basis, including at the financial year-end and reviewed by members of the authority.

7



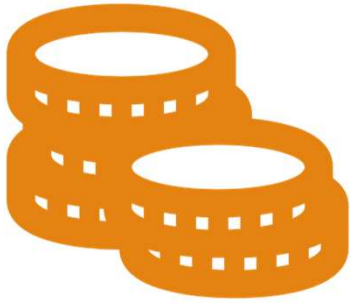
Assertion 1:
Financial management and preparation of accounts

Investments:

- Arrangements are in place to ensure that the authority's funds are managed properly and that any amounts surplus to requirements is invested appropriately, in accordance with an approved strategy.
- If total investments are to exceed the threshold specified in the statutory guidance at any time during a financial year, the authority needs to produce and approve an annual Investment Strategy in accordance with the guidance.

8

Assertion 1: Financial management and preparation of accounts



Reserves:

- Councils must have sufficient reserves (general and earmarked) to finance both their day-to-day operations and future plans.
- The councils need to have regard to the need to put in place a General Reserve Policy and have reviewed the level and purpose of all Earmarked Reserves.
- Smaller authorities have no specific right to accumulate funds via the precept. All reserves should be reviewed and justified regularly (i.e. at least annually).
- It is good practice to transparently publish both the level and rationale of all reserves.

9

Assertion 1: Financial management and preparation of accounts

General Reserves:

- The general reserve comprises cash flow and contingency funds to cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.
- The appropriate minimum level of general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.
- Council with significant self-generated income (other than the precept) should take into account situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt their general reserve accordingly.



10

Assertion 1: Financial management and preparation of accounts



Earmarked Reserves:

- No upper or lower limit to EMR
- EMR must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually and at budget setting) and should be separately identified.
- Significant levels of EMRs may give rise to enquiries from internal and/or external auditors.

11



Any questions
Before I go on.....

12

Assertion 2:

INTERNAL CONTROL

13

We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

ASSERTION 2:

14

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations:

- The authority needs to have in place standing orders and financial regulations governing how it operates.
- Financial regulations need to incorporate provisions for securing competition and regulating the way tenders are invited.
- These need to be regularly reviewed, fit for purpose and be adhered to.

15

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money:

- All payments made since the last meeting should be reported to the next authority meeting.
- Councillors should never be asked to sign blank cheques
- Petty cash should be kept to a minimum and should not be used when a traceable payment method is available.
- Authorities should ensure that invoices raised are paid promptly or that appropriate recovery action has been taken.
- Irrecoverable debts should be written off, after full consideration of the possibilities for, and the likely costs of, pursuing the debt.

16

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money:

- Authorities need to ensure controls over money are embedded in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Authorities need to approve the setting up of, and any changes to, accounts with banks or other financial institutions. The authority needs to approve every bank mandate, the list of authorised signatures for each account and any amendments to mandates.
- If held, corporate credit card accounts need to have defined limits and be cleared monthly by direct debit from the main bank account.

17

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Employment:

- The Clerk of any Local Council is always an employee if they are remunerated for the role. Authorities are required to be registered with HMRC
- All employers are required by law to take out employers' liability insurance and decide the appropriate level of fidelity guarantee insurance. All cover should be risk based and kept under constant review to make sure it adequately reflects changes in circumstances.

VAT:

- Smaller councils with little self-generated income recover VAT using the VAT126 form.
- Councils which are VAT registered must submit quarterly returns
- Councils carrying out building projects or managing income generating properties need to ensure that they seek up to date advice.

18

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Fixed Assets and Equipment:

The asset register should contain:

- ✓ the date of acquisition
- ✓ cost of acquisition
- ✓ useful life estimate
- ✓ location
- ✓ value held for investments

It is desirable for the register to contain other supplementary information to enable better understanding of the nature and scope of the fixed asset:

- insurance value
- replacement value
- custodian
- date last physically vouched

19

Assertion 2: Internal Control

Fixed assets and equipment:

- The council may choose an appropriate minimum value for deciding between fixed assets and general consumables. This minimum level is to be minuted and reviewed at least annually.
- Assets should be first recorded in the asset register at their actual purchase cost.
- Obsolete assets that are no longer in use or are awaiting disposal should be clearly recorded as such.
- Where an authority receives an asset as a gift at zero cost it should be included with a nominal one-pound (£1) value as a proxy for the zero cost.
- Commercial concepts of depreciation, impairment adjustments, and revaluation are not required nor appropriate for this method of asset valuation.

20

Assertion 2: Internal Control

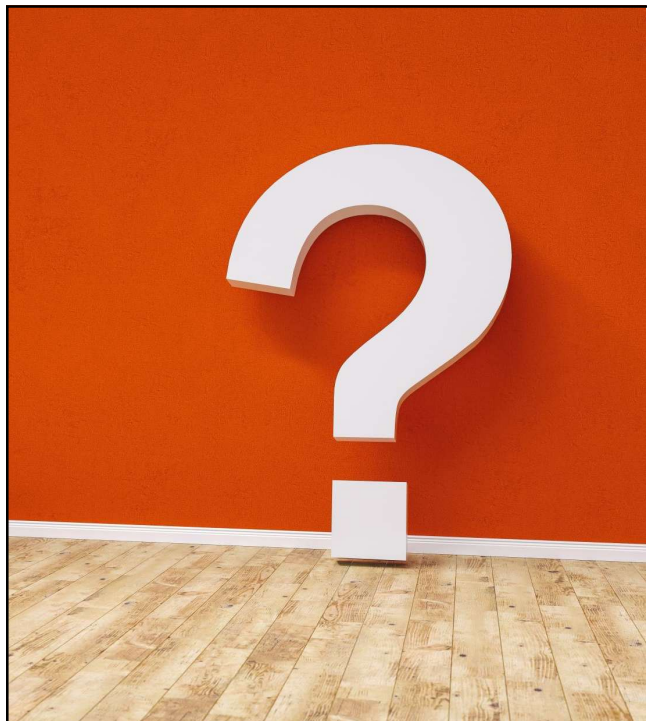
Loans and long-term liabilities

Authorities need to ensure that any loan or similar commitment is only entered into after the authority is satisfied that it can be afforded and that relevant approvals have been obtained.

Review of effectiveness

Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the authority to conduct a financial year review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

21



Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON....

22

Assertion 3:

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS, REGULATIONS AND
PROPER PRACTICES

23

We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.

ASSERTION 3

24

Assertion 3: Compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices



Acting within its powers



General power of competence



Regulations and proper practices



Actions during the year

25



Any questions
Before I go on.....

26

Assertion 4:

EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

27

We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

ASSERTION 4

28

Assertion 4 Exercise of public rights

The obligations of authorities are very specific, with key dates and periods of inspections laid out in legislation.

Website publication is a requirement.

The key points are:

- a 30 working day inspection period (this excludes weekends and public holidays), with accounts and supporting records being made available at reasonable times;
- the notice period should commence as soon as possible after approval of the accounts by the authority and must include the first 10 working days of Julya day's notice of commencement and be published together with sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.
- By no later than 30 September the authority must publish the external auditor's certificate and report.

29



Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON.....

30

Assertion 5:

RISK MANAGEMENT

31

We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

ASSERTION 5

32

Assertion 5 Risk management

- ❑ As council must identify and assess risks and address those identified risks by mitigating or managing them.
- ❑ Smaller authorities should identify both financial and operational risks.
- ❑ Larger authorities are likely to adopt more extensive procedures, which may utilise a risk assessment matrix and undertake more extensive risk arrangements (e.g. a working party to consider risks) and/or a full risk register.
- ❑ Typical categories of risks include:
 - **financial** – loss of money;
 - **security** – fraud, theft, embezzlement;
 - **property** – damage to property;
 - **legal** – breaking the law or being sued;
 - **IT** – failure of IT systems or misuse or data loss; and
 - **reputational** – actions taken could harm the authority's public reputation.



33



Any questions
Before I go on.....

34

Assertion 6:

INTERNAL AUDIT

35

We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.

ASSERTION 6

36

Assertion 6:

Internal audit

- Competent -
- Independent -

The council needs to appointed an **independent** and **competent** person to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes considering internal auditing guidance for smaller authorities.

- Did the council appoint the Internal Auditor?
- Did the council review the effectiveness of the Internal audit?
- Note: is not part of the internal auditor's responsibility to review or 'sign off' the completed AGAR.
- Internal Audit reports should be made available and be published

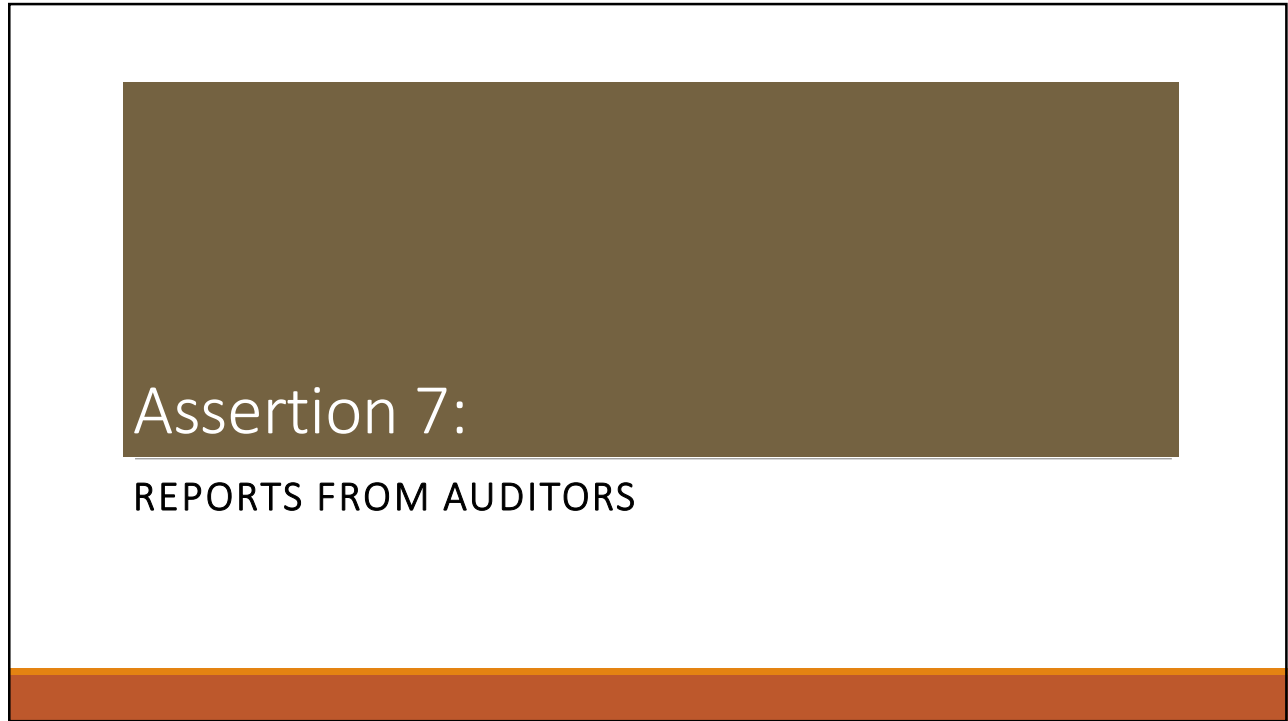
37



Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON....

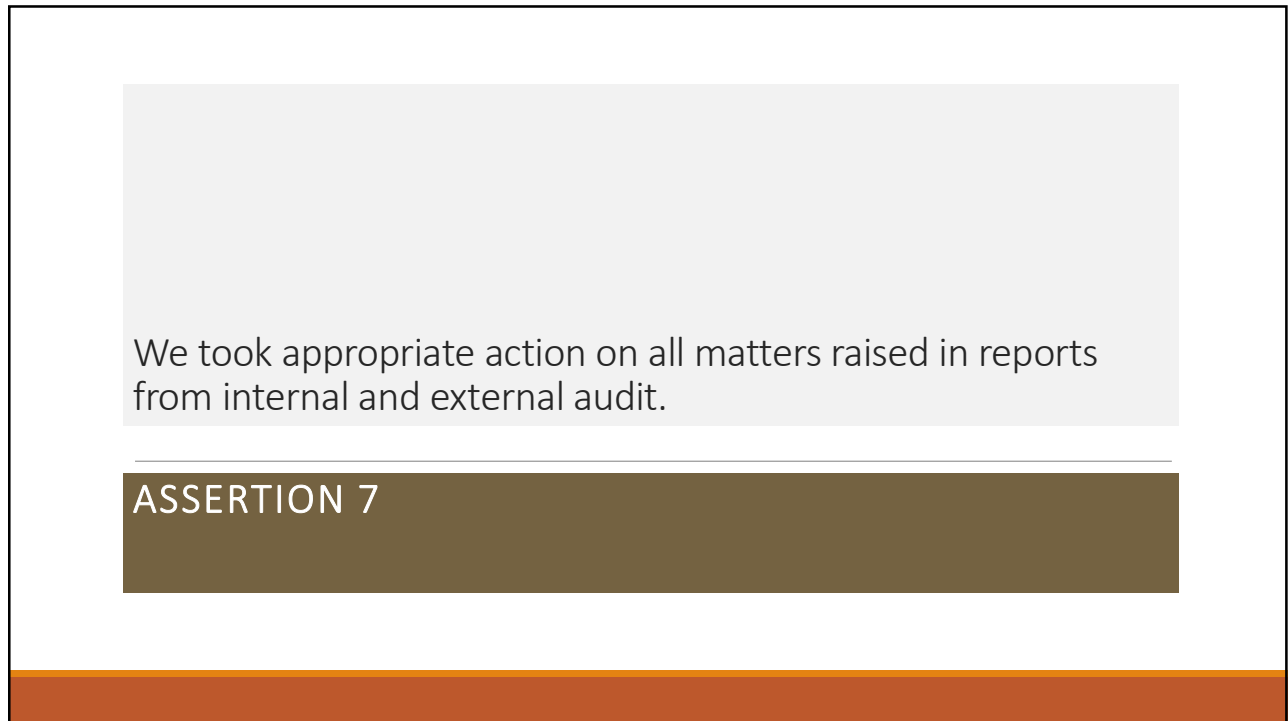
38



Assertion 7:
REPORTS FROM AUDITORS

This slide features a large, solid brown rectangular area in the upper half. Below this area, the text "Assertion 7:" is written in a white, sans-serif font, followed by "REPORTS FROM AUDITORS" in a smaller, black, all-caps, sans-serif font. The slide has a white background and a solid orange horizontal bar at the bottom.

39



We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

ASSERTION 7

This slide features a light gray rectangular area containing the text "We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit." Below this area is a thin horizontal line, followed by a dark brown rectangular area containing the text "ASSERTION 7" in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. The slide has a white background and a solid orange horizontal bar at the bottom.

40

Assertion 6:

Reports from auditors

- Internal Report -
- External Report -



The council needs to have considered all matters brought to its attention by its external auditor and internal audit and taken corrective action as appropriate.



A council should consider the matters included all audit reports and decide what action it needs to take to prevent recurrence of any issues raised.



The consideration and decisions should be included in formal minutes.

41

Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON....



42

Assertion 8:

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

43

We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

ASSERTION 8

44



Assertion 8 Significant Events

The council needs to have considered if any events that occurred during the financial year (or after the year-end), have consequences, or potential consequences, on the council's finances.

45



Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON.....

46

Assertion 9:

TRUST FUNDS

47

Trust funds (including charitable).
The council is a sole managing trustee and has discharged its accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.

ASSERTION 9

48

Assertion 9 Trust Funds

This assertion is for councils that are a sole managing trustee

This assertion is not for Councils that are custodian trustee

Councils should ensure that each trust or charity has its own bank account. Only amounts paid and received through that account should appear in the accounts of the charity.

Meetings of the council when it is acting as charity trustee must take place separately from those of the council acting as the council; it is suggested that a separate committee is established.

Trust assets held by the council as custodian or managing trustee should, be recorded in the council's asset register and identified as 'charity assets held by the authority as trustee' with their value excluded from the total.

49



Any questions

BEFORE I GO ON....

50



FINALLY.....

51

The all new !...
Assertion 10:

DIGITAL AND DATA COMPLIANCE

52

Wording of assertion not available yet

But.. Not much that is new actually!

ASSERTION 10

53

Assertion 10 Digital and data compliance

To warrant a positive response to assertion 10, the authority needs to have taken the following actions:

- 1. Email management** - Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for example clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk or clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk rather than abcparishclerk@gmail.com or abcparishclerk@outlook.com for example.
- 2. All websites must meet:** the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- 3. All websites must include:** published documentation as specified in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Transparency code for smaller authorities

54

Assertion 10 Digital and data compliance

To warrant a positive response to assertion 10, the authority needs to have taken the following actions:

4. **All councils** (including parish meetings) **must**: process personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection
5. **All councils** (excluding parish meetings) **must also have an IT policy**: This explains how everyone - clerks, members and other staff - should conduct authority business in a secure and legal way when using IT equipment and software. This relates to the use of authority-owned and personal equipment.

55

Assertion 10 Digital and data compliance

EMAIL MANAGEMENT

- Will most likely need to pay for an email service
- Go for a .gov.uk domain to potentially head off further changes in the future
- Buy accounts for all the councillors as well (again to head of change in the future) and encourage their use
- Excuses about cost will not wash – you are a public body and your being told to do this.

IT POLICY

- Don't reinvent the wheel, have a look at what policy are emerging at other councils and 'borrow
- Policy needs to be adopted before 31st March 2025
- Government Digital Service has provided a template IT policy
- Some authorities may already have a policy covering the use of IT equipment by members and officers, such as an acceptable use policy, which would satisfy this requirement.

56



QUOTE

Lufton Depot
7 Artillery Road
Yeovil
BA22 8RP
Prepared by: Jennifer Symes

Date: 25th March 2025
Ref: D/25-26

Donyatt Parish Council

We are pleased to submit the following quotation for your consideration.

Description	VAT	Amount
Dog bin x 2@ £6.50 emptied once a week. Location: Watery Lane & Park Lane	20%	£676.00

Subtotal	£676.00
Taxable	£676.00
VAT @ 20%	£135.20
Other	£0.00
TOTAL Due	£811.20

The above quotation is subject to the attached terms and conditions of business. Please ensure that you read the terms and conditions fully and that you agree to them before you accept this quotation.

I trust that we have interpreted your requirements accurately. Should you wish to accept this quotation on the terms and conditions set out, please detach, complete fully and return the acceptance slip to the address at the bottom of this letter or via e-mail. Please contact me should you require any further review. This quotation will remain fixed for a period of 30 days following which costs detailed may be subject to review.

Yours sincerely

streetsceneservices@somerset.gov.uk



ACCEPTANCE

Date: 25th March 2025

Ref: D/25-26

I accept your quotation of the above works.

Total: £811.20

Signed:.....

Name:

Date:

Address:

Please return acceptance slip to Street Scene Admin: Streetsceneservices@somerset.gov.uk

CONDITIONS OF SALE

This agreement, made between **Somerset Council** (“the Company”) and **the quotation acceptant** (“the Client”) sets out the terms and conditions under which the Company agrees that the Client may utilise the services of the Company. These terms and conditions include the details of the agreement contained within the Private Works Quotation specification.

1 Financial

1. For the purposes of VAT legislation, all sales will be subject to VAT at prevailing rates.
2. Save through its own negligence, the Company accepts no liability in respect of any loss, damage, injury or death sustained howsoever caused.
3. Appointments should not be considered as confirmed until the Company has acknowledged receipt of the completed Quotation Acceptance Slip.
4. Full payment of the balance for the total invoice value is required within 14 days of receipt of the invoice.
5. Payment in instalments may be permitted by prior arrangement only with the Company and agreed in writing.
6. A deposit may be required by the Company in some circumstances. This may be when the cost of materials or plant and equipment hire are high or the work is otherwise of a high value. Deposits may also be required in certain other circumstances.
7. Charges for additional services or goods which may not be known in advance may be invoiced separately. Payment of additional sums is required within 14 days of receipt of the invoice.
8. Cancellation of any works accepted under the terms of this contract must be in writing to Somerset Council. Cancellation during the 7 days immediately prior to a prearranged appointment for works to be undertaken will be subject to the Client paying the value of costs incurred by the Somerset West & Taunton up to 100% of the quotation value. Cancellation during the period 8 to 21 days prior to the commencement of the work may be subject to the Client paying costs incurred up to 50% of the quotation value. Cancellation during the period 22 to 30 days prior to the commencement of the work may be subject to the Client paying costs incurred up to 25% of the quotation value. The Company reserves the right to cancel any booking on seven days notice and the liability of the Company will be limited to a full refund of any monies paid in advance of the agreed work. In respect of the above, costs incurred may include plant and equipment hire, materials ordered, restocking costs and any other costs incurred in preparing to undertake agreed works as detailed within his quotation.
9. Materials shall remain in the ownership of the Company until such time as all invoices relating to the quoted and associated works are paid in full.
10. The cost of non-stock materials bought specifically for the works detailed within his quotation may be recharged to the Client in the case of cancellation by the Client under clause 1.8 of these terms & conditions.
11. The Company will work with clients should it be necessary to postpone accepted quoted works for an agreed period of time due to unforeseen circumstances, provided additional cost have not been unreasonably incurred by the Company. Should this situation be encountered, the Client should advise the Company at the earliest opportunity so that alternative arrangements can be made.

2 General

1. It is the responsibility of the Client to facilitate compliance by the Company with all requirements of the Fire Precautions Act 1971, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other relevant statutory requirements so far as they affect the Client's use and occupation of the premises and the undertaking of the agreed scope of work.
2. The Client shall not do or permit or suffer anything to be done which may cause a nuisance to the Company, its employees or authorised representatives during the course of agreed works to which this contract relates or the occupiers of any other part of the premises nor do or permit anything to be done whereby the Company's insurance policies would in any way be made void or invalid.
3. In accordance with the No Smoking policy operated by Somerset Council, our employees and representatives have the right to work within a smoke-free environment. The Client is requested to respect this policy. Somerset Council staff have the right to withdraw themselves from any work environment that prevents them working in accordance with this policy. Should agreed works be prevented from being completed because of non-compliance with this condition, the Client will remain responsible for all accepted costs and may need to make alternative arrangements for completion of outstanding works.

Lufton Depot, 7 Artillery Road, Yeovil, BA22 8RP
T: 0300 304 8000
www.somerset.gov.uk

Dear Parish Clerk & Councillors,

I am writing to update you on the outcome of the Planning Service Motion that was referred to Somerset Council's Climate and Place Scrutiny Committee for debate last week.

The motion which I presented on behalf of our Opposition Group was unanimously backed, cross-party, by the committee and will now return to Full Council on 17th December for consideration.

The motion specifically called for a Planning Service Recovery Plan to include:

- **Measurable targets** to reduce the backlog of applications and restore timely determinations.
- **Restoring parish and councillor engagement** to pre-July levels, including removal of the "single email point" restriction.
- **A plan to tackle enforcement backlogs** and to fill vacant posts with permanent staff.
- **Quarterly performance reporting** for 12 months after the emergency period ends.
- **Direct engagement with parishes, councillors, and agents** to establish a "good practice charter" for the planning service going forward.

During the debate, councillors from all parties recognised the work being done to stabilise the service and shared constructive ideas to support the next stage of recovery.

Conservative Councillors present raised particular concerns around:

- the need for stronger and more timely planning enforcement (Cllr Alistair Hendry)
- fairer and more practical consultation deadlines for parish councils (Cllr Sue Osborne)
- the importance of proper resourcing and joined-up working across departments to ensure that bottlenecks are solved, not simply moved around (Cllr Bob Filmer)

It was positive to see cross-party agreement on our Opposition Group motion and recognition that the planning service must recover in a way that works for councillors, parish councils, and residents alike.

The next step is for Full Council on 17th December, where the motion will be formally considered...again.

I will keep you updated after that meeting.

Thank you

Diogo Rodrigues - Leader of the Conservative Opposition on Somerset Council

John Cook-Woodman - Opposition Lead Member for Economic Development,
Planning and Assets

Parish Information Sheet



Ref: 01/2025

For use by Somerset Council

From:	Chris Hall, Executive Director for Community, Place and Economy
--------------	--

Date:	20/10/25
--------------	-----------------

To:	Somerset Parish Clerks
------------	-------------------------------

Please find a message below which is being sent on behalf of Somerset Council's Planning Service:

Thank you for bearing with us over the last 12 weeks while Somerset Council's planning service operated a temporary "Prioritising Decisions Period" (PDP). This was an exceptional response to a significant and growing backlog of undecided applications.

The PDP has now ended. During this time, we reduced the number of on hand applications from around 1,600 to around 1,300 applications, a reduction of 20%. We focused on making confident, proportionate decisions and streamlining our internal processes. Many of those improvements will now continue as standard practice.

Here's what this means for you:

- We will continue to return and refund invalid applications within strict time limits.
- We've published new guidance on when amendments will be accepted (see attached) and how to submit them clearly.
- We will continue to avoid unnecessary pre-commencement conditions wherever possible.
- We will continue to use proportionate judgement and make decisions, rather than waiting for consultees outside the consultation period, where standing advice applies.

We know not everything is perfect yet – we're continuing to work on speeding up consultee responses and improving communication tools and templates.

Thank you again for your cooperation. The PDP was only one step in our wider service improvement programme, and your continued feedback is welcome as we make further progress.

Somerset Planning Service
20 October 2025

Please find attached a briefing sheet providing an update from our planning service and an associated guide with regard to amendments. The content is also replicated below:

Thank you for bearing with us over the last 12 weeks while Somerset Council's planning service operated a temporary "Prioritising Decisions Period" (PDP). This was an exceptional response to a significant and growing backlog of undecided applications.

The PDP has now ended. During this time, we reduced the number of on hand applications from around 1,600 to around 1,300 applications, a reduction of 20%. We focused on making confident, proportionate decisions and streamlining our internal processes. Many of those improvements will now continue as standard practice.

Here's what this means for you:

- We will continue to return and refund invalid applications within strict time limits.
- We've published new guidance on when amendments will be accepted (**see attached**) and how to submit them clearly.
- We will continue to avoid unnecessary pre-commencement conditions wherever possible.
- We will continue to use proportionate judgement and make decisions, rather than waiting for consultees outside the consultation period, where standing advice applies.

We know not everything is perfect yet – we're continuing to work on speeding up consultee responses and improving communication tools and templates.

Thank you again for your cooperation. The PDP was only one step in our wider service improvement programme, and your continued feedback is welcome as we make further progress.

Somerset Planning Service
20 October 2025

Guidance on the submission of amended plans and additional information – October 2025

We accept that negotiations on proposals are an important part of the application process. However, amendments are not an alternative to well-thought-out, consulted, and properly prepared schemes in the first place. We continue to recommend that applicants use the pre-application service so that issues can be identified and addressed early on. This means that follow-on applications can be determined with the benefit of the pre-application advice if it has been followed and is within reasonable timeframes.

It is the responsibility of applicants and agents to ensure that the correct information is submitted with applications. Failure to do so will result in applications either being unvalidated or refused, due to missing information. The validation checklist is contained on our [web page](#). We will only accept any amendment to the red line site area after an application is validated, where the change relates to the location of the proposed access or involves the reduction in the site area to resolve ownership issues. Any other changes required to the red line will require the application to be withdrawn and resubmitted.

We only accept amendments or additional information after the initial submission and validation of a planning application and during its consideration in the following circumstances:

- If pre-application advice was not obtained or followed, it is unlikely that we will negotiate any changes and the application will be decided based on the information originally submitted
- If pre-application advice has been sought and the proposals do not follow the advice issued, the application will be decided based on the information originally submitted
- If pre-application advice has been sought and the advice has been followed, we will negotiate on minor amendments if required
- In the case of applications for matters reserved by condition we will only allow one attempt at amending the application before issuing our decision, all decisions on Discharge of Conditions will be made within a maximum of 12 weeks
- In the case of householder and non-major applications, case officers may seek one set of amendments to make a scheme acceptable and which would not result in the need for re-consultation and allow the application to be determined within the statutory time limits
- In the case of major applications, case officers will only seek amendments that do not fundamentally change the form of the proposals and if it is a minor matter in

response to consultation responses that can be dealt with within the statutory time limits, any amendments that would result in the need to display new notices will not normally be accepted

- In all cases, if there is an objection to the principle of development, the application will be determined on the information originally submitted
- If a retrospective application is refused, we will take formal action immediately after the decision is issued

13 October 2025