

BAWD RIP PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Bawdrip Parish Council was held in the Parish Hall, Eastside Lane, Bawdrip on Tuesday, 13th January, 2026 at 7.30 pm.

Present:- Parish Councillors: Mrs K Bradley (Chair), Mr P Clarke, Mr E Crane, Mr R Culverhouse and Mr D Rayner; **Somerset Ward Councillors** Mr A Dingwall and Mr D Rodrigues; **Clerk** Graham Jarvis together with seven members of the public.

Public Speaking Time: Topic raised – Damaged verge New Road

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- 104. Apologies for Absence, Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations.**
No apologies for absence were received. Mr Crane disclosed a pecuniary interest in the agenda item 10c regarding potential donation of land to the Parish Council. Mr Culverhouse held dispensations from the Code of Conduct relating to the Village Website and issues associated with planning application 04/21/00007.
- 105. Minutes of Previous Meeting.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd December 2025 were presented, approved and signed as a complete and correct record.
- 106. Matters Arising:**
- a) 93b – Oak Meadow Development:** The Clerk reads an email from the developer which mentioned that no decision had yet been taken on the future ownership of the play area as two dwellings on the site had still to be sold. Councillors noted that at present the play area was closed and wished for an indication as to when the facility would be open.
Mr Crane raised the issue of a section of Parish Council owned fence which apparently had not been re-instated during the construction phase. To clarify and hopefully resolve matters, it was agreed to invite Mr Trott to a site visit with representatives of the Parish Council.
- b) 93c - Owl box:** The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Mr Sperring who would be sending an invoice to the Council for the box.
- 107. Somerset Councillors' Report.**
M Dingwall and Mr Rodrigues gave a join report. Reference was made to the Local Government Financial settlement for 2026/27 with the budget to be set on 25th February. An application was expected to be made to Central Government for permission to increase the Council Tax over the threshold without triggering a referendum. A scheme to unify parking charges on Sundays throughout the County had been deferred pending a wider review. Issues regarding the planning service were starting to be addressed.
- 108. Local Emergency Planning Arrangements –** No updates reported.
- 109. Climate Emergency Activities.**
Further to Minute 93d – 2nd December 2025; Mrs Bradley displayed a draft of a poster seeking volunteers for the proposed **Community Garden**. After a minor amendment there was agreement that the poster would be circulated. Potential **Reedbed** - Mrs Earnshaw reported that a letter would shortly be sent to a local

landowner making them aware of funding available to support such schemes. It was agreed that the position be noted.

110. Planning Matters.

a) Application 04/25/00006.

The Clerk reported that notification of the above application had been received since the December meeting. Due to a technicality the solar panel element of application 04/25/00005 had been transferred to a separate application - 04/25/00006. In view of the difficulties of arranging a special meeting or obtaining an extension to consultation period, a decision was taken to process the matter under the Council's Business Continuity Plan. As the Parish Council had already supported the original application (Minute 82 - 4th November 2025) a similar response had been made to the Local Planning Authority in respect of the "new" application. There was agreement that the action taken be confirmed.

**b) Decisions notified by the Local Planning Authority and recorded:-
04/25/00005 & 04/25/00006 – 2 Eastside Lane, Approved (Delegated Authority).**

c) Proposed Somerset Data Centre – Request for Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion to Somerset Council Ref 09/25/00024.

The Parish Council had become aware of the request relating to land on Horsey Level which included the Parishes of Bridgwater Without and Bawdrip. The request was part of the process prior to submission of a formal planning application.

Members were conscious that the ramifications to the environment should the project proceed were considerable. Accordingly, the Environmental Impact Assessment would need to comprehensively address those issues. It was agreed that Members would review the information available on the planning portal and forward their comments to the Clerk who, in consultation with the Chair, would forward the Parish Council's recommendations to the Local Planning Authority.

Mrs Bradley mentioned that residents were able to make their own representations to the Somerset Council on the matter in hand. An opportunity to comment on the merits of the project on planning grounds would occur if a formal application ensued.

111. Financial Matters.

a) Payment of Creditors.

The following payments were approved:-

- i) Stepping Out in Somerset CIC – Gardening Services - £364.00 – Cheque No. 791. (There was agreement that the services of the payee be retained for 2026).
- ii) Bawdrip PCC – Hall Hire - £27.00 - Cheque No. 792.

b) Parish Precept 2026/27.

A Precept request of £10,000 was proposed by Mr Clarke, seconded by Mrs Bradley and passed unanimously. It was noted that due to a rise in the Tax base, the increase of £500 in the Precept compared to 2025/26 would reduce the Parish Council element of the Council Tax for a Band D property by £0.26 (0.67%) to £38.89.

c) Budget 2026/27.

A proposal by Mr Bradley, seconded by Mr Crane that the budget as presented showing an expected level for the general reserve of £11,697 at the 31st March 2027 was passed unanimously.

d) Other Financial Matters – None.

112. Reports from Parish Councillors and the Clerk on events attended or planned.

Mrs Bradley was unfortunately unable to attend the Responding to Planning Applications event arranged by the Somerset Association of Local Councils on 8th December. A similar event was expected to be held later in the year. Details were given of a community drop-in session about the Gravity Enterprise Zone on Wednesday, 28th January between 2.30 – 5.30pm at the 37 Sports and Social Club, Puriton.

113. Roads and Footpaths.

a) Outdoor Gym Area – Potential Improvements.

Further to Minute 100a – 2nd December 2025; Mr Clarke reported that towards the end of the financial year the Environment Agency would undertake a review to see if any funds would be available to assist in the scheduled improvements. Once the result of the review was known options would be evaluated.

b) Report from the Parish Path Liaison Officers.

Mr Clarke read the report dated 11th January. The next Village Walk was planned for 17th January. There was agreement to accept Jackie and Jo's kind offer to undertake the review of potential Rights of Way as part of the Ramblers 2026 Project. *(A copy the report is appended to the signed copy of the minutes of this meeting).*

Mr Rayner mentioned that the manufacture of the gate in which two fawns became trapped last year. (Minute 54b – 1st October 2024 refers) were unwilling to modify the design. An approach to the Somerset Wildlife Trust had suggest contact be made with Trading Standard. Further investigations were being made and Mr Rayner would update the Parish Council in due course.

c) Potential donation of land.

Mr Crane outlined the offer to the Parish Council and left the room whilst the matter was discussed.

After a general discussion it was resolved that to enable further consideration the Council wished to view a detailed plan of the land involved.

Mr Crane returned to the room and was told of the Council's wish and said that a plan would be supplied.

d) Visibility Splays New Road / Bawdrip Lane.

The item appeared on the agenda following a request by a resident at the December meeting. As the Parish Council were not aware of any incidents at the location or of general concerns it was agreed that no action would be taken. However, the resident was at liberty to approach the Highway Authority direct if they so wished.

e) Light Pollution.

Pursuant to Minute 84 - 4th November 2025; Mr Clarke reported that following discussions the lighting at the Environment Agency Depot had been adjusted which he believed was an improvement. Mr Clarke invited residents to contact him with their views on the change.

f) Sedgemoor Ramblers – Offer to Donate Bench.

Further to Minute 100d - 2nd December 2025; Mrs Bradley reported that enquiries to form a list of local landowners, who had potential locations for the bench, were continuing.

g) Flooding Issues.

Mrs Bradley stated that the persistent problems encountered on Eastside Lane during periods of heavy rainfall had again been reported to the authorities.

114. Correspondence.

The Clerk reported that since the previous meeting the following items had been circulated to members by email: -

a) Somerset Council

- i) Avalon & Poldens LCN - Meeting on 7th January – online only due to weather forecast.
- ii) Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) – extended to 9th January.
- iii) Parish Information Sheet – Storm Goretti
- iv) Somerset Council Weather Situation Reporting Tool – Storm Goretti.
- v) Letter from Council Leader – Reflections and Updates.

b) Councillor Diago Rodrigues – Update on Planning Service.

c) Somerset Association of Local Councils:-

- i) Details of Training Events January – March (external and internal).
- ii) Details of Step, Ride Thrive Projects across the Avalon and Poldens LCN.

d) Ramblers 2026 Project: Potential Rights for Bawdrip Parish Council - Review Request. (Refer to Minute 133b above).

e) Available for viewing – Clerks & Councils Direct – January Issue.

115. Topics for future Meetings – None.

116. Date of next regular Meeting – Tuesday, 3rd February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Meeting Closed 9.18 pm.

Chair