

Draft Minutes of Winterborne St Martin Parish Council (V1)

Monday 27 April 2026

Martinstown Village Hall

Present: Cllrs, Nuttall (Chair), Fitzgerald, Hutchings, Walker, Pemberton, Eversden, Marsh, Andrews

Apologies: Cllrs Hosford

Democratic Period:

A parishioner raised a detailed concern about the council's finances, in particular on the Precept increase and carry-forward.

The main points raised by the parishioner:

- The council is carrying forward £5,000 more than the previous year.
- Despite this, the precept increased by approximately 24–25%, as shown on residents' council tax bills.

The parishioner questioned:

- Why such a large carry-forward was necessary.
- Whether the increase was justified.
- Whether councillors fully understood the figures they had approved.

Cllr Nuttall explained:

- Historically, CIL money had been used for stream clearance.
- Last year the council decided to fund this from the precept, increasing the required amount.
- Some planned expenditures (tree works, garage maintenance) did not occur, contributing to the carry-forward.

The parishioner challenged this, noting:

- Some of the cited works were not in the budget, so could not explain the carry-forward.
- Councillors should be able to recall key financial figures.

Cllr Nuttall acknowledged he did not have the detailed figures at the meeting and could not confirm the exact percentage increase.

Clerk will provide a written explanation addressing the specific question.

Action: Clerk

247/2025 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Marsh and Cllr Pemberton declared an interest in item 10a.

248/2025 Dorset Cllr report

None received.

249/2025 Police report

This was circulated to all Cllrs.

It was briefly referenced that an armed response incident had occurred in the village; this will appear in next month's report.

250/2025 Minutes of Winterborne St Martin Parish Council meeting held on Monday 23 March 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Pemberton that these minutes should be accepted as a true record of the meeting. Agreed with one abstention (Cllr Marsh) – RESOLVED

251/2025 Statement of Council's position regarding the co-option process at the March meeting

The Chair delivered a detailed formal statement acknowledging a procedural breach during the March co-option:

Key points from the Chair's statement

- Two candidates applied for one vacancy.
- A ballot resulted in a tie; a second vote was held, and the Chair used his casting vote to appoint Vicki Andrews.

This process itself was valid but:

- Cllr Andrews application form was circulated too late. Standing Orders require three clear days for circulation of meeting papers (excluding Sunday and the meeting day).
- Councillors therefore had only Friday and Saturday to review the single sheet application
- No one noticed the error during the meeting; it was identified afterwards.

The Chair apologised for the oversight and confirmed he had written to the other candidate explaining the situation.

The other candidate was present at the meeting and stated they had not received the email, however the clerk and councillors had received it.

The Chair confirmed the address used and apologised; a printed copy was offered.

Cllr Marsh commented that although an error occurred, the overall process still appeared fair, and the council should now move on.

No councillors raised any further concerns.

252/25 Motion

"This Council acknowledges that it breached its Co-option Policy in the election held on 23rd March 2026"

Proposed by Cllr Pemberton and seconded by Cllr Hutchings

Following the Cllr Nuttall's statement and apology, Cllr Pemberton withdrew the motion, stating the matter had been adequately addressed. Cllr Hutchings as seconder agreed.

No further discussion.

253/2025 Action points from last minutes

- a) 235d)/2025 – Clerk to pursue costs of footpath with Highways

Clerk confirmed the issue has been passed to the Transport Planning Team, not the Community Highways Team. They will score the proposal and determine feasibility.

- b) 236b)/2025 – Clerk to issue revised draft Financial Regulations

Revised draft issued to councillors but not published with meeting papers therefore it was agreed to defer adoption until next month, so the public has the opportunity to review them.

- c) 238/2025 – Clerk to identify deposit records

Clerk could not find any record of deposits being taken historically.

One former allotment holder is requesting a refund. Councillors noted that receipts should exist if deposits were paid.

Clerk to contact the individual and clarify.

Action: Clerk to contact previous allotment holder

Cllr Nuttall confirmed he had received £50 cash from one of the allotment holders who has two allotments and has transferred the equivalent amount to the council's account.

- d) 246/2025 – Clerk to follow up with highways regarding the EV charging points

The Clerk advised the charging points remain non-functional and the issue lies with the provider, no timeframe available.

254/2025 Finance

- a) Approval of schedule of payments & bank reconciliation

These were checked and approved by Cllr Marsh.

- b) To review and adopt the updated Financial Regulations

Item deferred to next agenda.

- c) Review end of year accounts

The Clerk has issued the Scribe-generated year-end figures.

Some Cllrs noted the receipts/payments layout was confusing but accepted the figures.

It was proposed by Cllr Nuttall and seconded by Cllr Pemberton that the end of year accounts are approved. All agreed - RESOLVED

All Agendas & Minutes can be viewed at www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk

d) Internal audit update

The Clerk confirmed the internal audit is scheduled for week commencing 25 May 2026 and expects to send all documents this week.

Action Clerk to send documents to Auditor

Governance statements will be circulated before the next meeting.

e) Insurance renewal

The Clerk advised that the renewal quote of £561.91 (previous year £533.42) has been received.

This was discussed and it was agreed to seek comparative quotes from other parish-council insurers.

Action Clerk to seek alternative quotes for insurance

The renewal is due 5 June 2026.

255/2025 Planning

a) Planning Consultation

P/FUL/2026/00478 - West End House Road Past Blagdon Hill Martinstown - Installation of a tennis court and associated change of use to a small part of the adjacent field to ancillary residential, extending the curtilage of West End House

It was agreed that as there are no material planning reasons to discuss, no comments will be submitted.

256/2025 Updates on: Highways, ROW and SID/Allotments/Flood, Stream and Riverbanks/Washpool/Grounds

a) Update on willow tree works

Cllr Marsh advised that the contractor has postponed pollarding until 1 September due to:

- Tree being in leaf (risk of damage)
- Presence of nesting birds

Cllrs expressed disappointment but accepted the ecological reasoning. If the contractor delays again, the council may consider alternative quotes.

Clerk to confirm acceptance of the September date and request a specific week.

Action: Clerk to contact tree surgeon.

b) Update on Washpool

Cllr Nuttall reminded the council that they had previously agreed to pursue leasing of land around the wash pool via manorial rights held by a parishioner. The parishioner's solicitor has offered to complete the work for £750 + VAT, reduced from the usual £1,500.

This is close to the previously approved budget (£600–£700).

Cllr Nuttall has not yet instructed the solicitor; a letter must be sent to the parishioner confirming the council's commitment to covering legal fees.

A discussion noted that the solicitor acts for Mr Duke, not the council, and the council cannot seek alternative quotes for this specific legal process.

Some Cllrs objected to paying legal fees that in their view benefited a private landowner. Cllr Nuttall advised that it would not benefit the parishioner but declined to reopen the debate, noting the decision had already been voted on.

Council were reminded that there had been a previous resolution and this could not be overturned without due process.

Cllr Eversden initiated a vote of no confidence in the Chair. Clerk advised this must be tabled formally for the next agenda.

257/2025 Update on Wessex Water/Green Martinstown liaison group from Cllr's Walker/Hutchings

Cllr Marsh reported:

- Joint meetings have been held with Green Martinstown and Winterborne Monkton Parish Council.
- All agreed that Wessex Water must replace the sewer pipe, not reline it.
- Aim to hold alternating meetings every six months.

Minutes will be circulated to all councillors.

Action: Clerk

258/2025 V & V

It was agreed that Cllr Andrews would provide the next update.

259/2025 Village Hall Trustee

Cllrs Pemberton and Nuttall gave the following update:

- New electronic access system in place; codes required for entry.
- Playground reopened after refurbishment.
- Pickleball club growing in popularity.
- Additional microphones now available for hall users.

Cllr Marsh enquired if a bike rack might be provided at the Village Hall particularly for when children cycle to the play park. Cllr Pemberton agreed to raise this with the Committee.

Action: Cllr Pemberton

260/2025 Memorial Hall

Cllr Nuttall gave the following update:

- Parish Council now has access to the Lloyds account containing approx. £7,000.
- Three councillors (Chair, Cllr. Hosford, Cllr. Fitzgerald) are signatories.
- Work ongoing to enable online banking access.

All Agendas & Minutes can be viewed at www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk

- Issue raised regarding business rates demand; believed to be incorrect. Cllr Hosford investigating.

261/2025 DAPTC

- a) Statement of Reasonable Expectations (SoRE) – advise Cllrs to read ahead of April’s meeting

Council noted the document and the general view is to be cautious and non-committal.

262/2025 Staffing Committee

Committee to review staffing procedures and appraisal process.

Action: Staffing Committee to revise procedure and bring recommendations to Council.

263/2025 Dates for Parish meeting and Annual General Meeting

It was agreed the Parish Meeting will be held on Friday 15 May, 6.30 pm at the Village Hall.

The AGM and May Council Meeting will be held on 1 June with the AGM at 6:30pm, followed by full Council meeting at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

264/2025 External correspondence received

- a) Rainbarrow Farm meeting update – Cllr Marsh

Deferred to next agenda as Cllr Marsh left meeting early.

- b) Community Conversations event

The Clerk advised the Council of these meetings be held by Dorset Council. Nobody volunteered to attend.

- c) Consultation Events - Beaver Wild Release

The Clerk advised of the dates for these events.

- d) Use of Magna room

The Clerk advised an email has been received from Magna who are asking if the Parish Council still require use of the room. The Council agreed to relinquish the booking, continuing to use the Village Hall.

- e) Speeding concerns in village

The Clerk advised of an email received from a parishioner who has raised safety concerns due to lack of pavement and speeding vehicles to the east of the village and requested consideration of:

- SID placement
- 20mph limit

It was agreed to place this as a motion on next month’s agenda.

265/2025 Parish Matters

Cllr Hutchings raised concern regarding the defibrillator currently not functioning.

Cllr Nuttall stated that although this isn’t a Parish Council asset the council had previously contributed to maintenance.

The Parish Council to consider options (including leasing a unit) at next meeting.

Action: Chair to contact responsible parishioner for update.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm with notice that the next meeting will be the Parish meeting which will be held on Friday 15th May 2026, 18.30hrs at Martinstown Village Hall.

All Agendas & Minutes can be viewed at www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk

The AGM will be held on Monday 1 June 2026, 6.30pm at the Villag Hall followed by the May Parish Council meeting at 7pm.