

LOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON WEDNESSAY 11TH MARCH 2026 AT 7.00PM

In attendance: Chairman Shipton, Cllr Bassett, Cllr Davies, Cllr Eden, Unitary Cllr. Tristram and approx. 20 members of the Public.

The Minutes were taken by Clerk Sally Ferguson. The meeting opened at 7 p.m.

67/25 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

68/25 Apologies for absence-None received

69/25 Declaration of Interests – None declared.

70/25 Minutes of Last Meeting – The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 6th January 2026 were resolved as accurate and signed by the Chairman.

71/25 Public Speaking-

The Chairman explained that public speaking would be limited to 20 minutes during this meeting. However, an Extraordinary Meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday 18th March to allow further discussion regarding community concerns about alleged planning breaches. The meeting was closed at 7:01 p.m. to allow members of the public to speak.

The owner of Loxton Hill Farm introduced himself to those present and said he would be happy to answer questions. Unitary Cllr Tristram asked for further details regarding the proposed resurfacing of the bridleway. Cllr Tristram informed the meeting that the tarmacking work had been halted for the time being, while additional queries were being investigated by the Planning Department and the Access Officer. The landowner stated that the proposal was intended purely for agricultural and operational reasons. The Chair asked about a large gathering that took place in 2024. The landowner explained that this had been a one-off event and would not take place again. Several other residents asked questions. The meeting reopened at 7:22 p.m.

An agenda for the Extraordinary Meeting on 18th March, which will further discuss the concerns raised, was distributed. Most residents then left the meeting, with approximately seven remaining for the remainder of the agenda.

72/25 Planning:

There were no planning applications for consideration.

73/25 Free Trees

Chairman Shipton provided the Clerk with a map of where trees were needed, and she would look for opportunities of funding.

74/25 Mendip Hills Community Fund

The Clerk had applied for a bench for the Parish Acre and was waiting to hear if successful.

75/25

It was resolved to grant £100 to both Christon and Loxton Churches towards Grounds Maintenance.

76/25

There had been reports of anti-social behaviour, with tacks being thrown on the Highway, making hazardous conditions, damaging tyres, and causing potential for injury to dogs and horses. It was reported here was now sufficient evidence for an arrest to be made.

77/25

It was resolved to award the Clerk a one-point increase in salary scale (29p per hour), and to increase the homeworking allowance from £20 to £26 per month from 1st April 2026.

78/25

It was resolved to appoint Mr. R. Young as Internal Auditor.

79/25

It was resolved to approve the Asset Register 2025-2026.

80/25

It was resolved to approve the Statement of Internal Controls 2025-2026.

81/25

It was resolved to approve the Risk Management Report 2025-2026.

82/25

It was resolved to approve the payments since last meeting and acknowledge those due before the next meeting in May 2026.

Finance and to approve payments since last meeting-

- Clerk Salary February =£164.96
- Home Allowance/ Exp = £26.35
- N.I./Tax December = £41.20
- February Bank Charge= £4.25
- Clerk Salary March= £164.96
- N.I./Tax March = £41.20
- Home Allowance= £20.00
- March Bank Charge= £4.25

Bank Balances before March payments are:

- Current Account = £719.46
- Deposit Account = £9,459.62
- VAT (To reclaim) = £351.71

83/25 Reports:

1. **Unitary Councillor** –Cllr Tristram mentioned the imminent Council tax increase of 9%, which was allowed by central Government under special financial circumstances, and bring in £5.9m would be swallowed up as a sum of £6m had been taken from NSC in other areas. He was involved in a bid from the National Lottery for Mendip Hills Heritage and mentioned that Christon would form part of the background for the application, as the Church and hidden medieval village were of national heritage significance.
2. **Highways/Footpaths** –The issue of responsibility for the fallen wall on the edge of the road in Loxton was still ongoing. Cllr Tristram was meeting with the Highways engineer and would ask for any further information, as a stalemate situation had been reached with NSC and the Landowner both not accepting responsibility.
3. **Parish Acre** – No report.
4. **Parish Orderly** -Nothing else to report.
5. **Community Hub** – Cllr Davies provided an update on the Community Hub. The rendering has now been completed, although it was four months behind schedule. Poor weather was cited as a major factor contributing to the slow progress during the final stages of the work. The pathway is still to be completed.

84/25 Items not covered elsewhere and items for the next agenda:

**Next meeting: Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council,
18th March 2026 at 7 p.m.**

Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.